



No. CLXVI.]

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LONGMANS, GREEN, & CO.  
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## Yet UNCOMMON!

FOR SOME WISE CAUSE,

'It is the little things that  
rule this Life;'

OR, IN OTHER WORDS:—

'Sow an Act, and you Reap a Habit;  
Sow a Habit, and you Reap a Character;  
Sow a Character, and you Reap a  
Destiny!'—THACKERAY.

'And such is human life, so gliding on;  
It glimmers like a meteor, and is gone!'

MORAL:—

'In Life's Play the Player of the other  
side is Hidden from us. We know that  
his play is Always Fair, Just, and Patient.  
but we also know to our Cost that He  
Never Overlooks a Mistake. *It's for you to*  
*find out WHY YOUR EARS ARE BOXED.*

—HUXLEY.

### HOW TO AVOID THE INJURIOUS EFFECTS OF STIMULANTS.

**T**HE PRESENT SYSTEM OF LIVING—partaking of too rich foods, as pastry, saccharine, and fatty substances, alcoholic drinks, and an insufficient amount of exercise—frequently deranges the liver. I would advise all bilious people, unless they are careful to keep the liver acting freely, to exercise great care in the use of alcoholic drinks; avoid sugar, and always dilute largely with water. Experience shows that porter, mild ales, port wine, dark sherries, sweet champagne, liqueurs, and brandies are all very apt to disagree; while light white wines, and gin or old whisky largely diluted with pure mineral water charged only with natural gas, will be found the least objectionable. ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT' is PECULIARLY ADAPTED for any CONSTITUTIONAL \*WEAKNESS of the LIVER; it possesses the power of reparation when digestion has been disturbed or lost, and PLACES the INVALID on the RIGHT TRACK to HEALTH. A world of woes is avoided by those who keep and use ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT.' Therefore NO FAMILY SHOULD EVER BE WITHOUT IT.

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The value of ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT' cannot be told.

Its success in Europe, Asia, Africa, America, Australia, and New Zealand proves it.

THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT where it has been taken in the earliest stages of a disease, it has, in innumerable instances, PREVENTED what would otherwise have been a SERIOUS ILLNESS. The effect of ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT' upon a disordered and feverish condition of the system is MARVELLOUS.

**CAUTION.**—Examine each Bottle, and see that the Capsule is marked ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT.' Without it, you have been imposed on by a WORTHLESS and occasionally poisonous imitation. PREPARED ONLY AT

ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT' Works, London, S.E., by J. C. Eno's Patent.







# LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE.

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AUGUST 1896.

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## *Flotsam.*<sup>1</sup>

BY HENRY SETON MERRIMAN.

### CHAPTER XXVIII.

#### A PURCHASE.

ALTHOUGH Galle has belonged to England these many years, there still lingers in its quaint white houses and neat fortifications the touch of the Dutchman's hand. The sea was rippling in before a strong breeze, as Harry's steamer swung round the point, with its lighthouse, which then had a look of 'Mynheer' about it, though to-day a larger structure graces the south-west extremity of Ceylon. It was early afternoon. The steamer which brought Harry was timed to sail again at ten o'clock for Bombay, and he hoped to take passage in her.

The little town of Galle, which since then has bloomed into a port of call only to fade into obscurity again, looked pretty enough this afternoon. Its verdure was restful to eyes accustomed to the glare of Calcutta streets and the brown herbage of India. The harbour was gay with bunting and brightly painted craft. The catamarans sped hither and thither across the rippled water.

Harry looked at it all moodily enough, and the keen-faced lawyer by his side smoked a cigarette indifferently.

'Do you think we'll get the child?' asked Captain Wylam, perhaps for the hundredth time.

<sup>1</sup> Copyright 1896 by Longmans, Green, & Co.

'Not a doubt of it,' replied the man of law, who reflected with complacency that his legal match was not to be found south of Madras.

'I'll see her alone—at first,' said Harry.

'Yes—you will be wise to do so. These matters are so often painful.'

So they landed and went to the hotel where, as Marquerry had foretold, they found Maria's name upon the books. The lady was in the verandah of her own room—number fourteen—the servants said. She was entertaining friends.

'Already!' muttered Harry, with a frown. 'Show me to the verandah occupied by Mrs. Wylam.'

'Name, sir,' said the obsequious Cingalese waiter.

'Wylam!'

And the attendant hurried on, followed only by Harry; the lawyer, with the discretion of his craft, remaining in the entrance-hall in company with a long tumbler of brandy and soda-water. His keen eye contracted, as he saw the young officer walk away with a peculiar unsteadiness of the limbs.

'In a bad way, that chap,' he muttered, taking up a newspaper.

The first sound that Harry heard as he entered number fourteen was his wife's high-pitched laugh, followed by a masculine and somewhat throaty sound of merriment. Maria was apparently entertaining her friends with considerable success. These, however, on closer investigation, appeared to have existed only in the imagination of the Cingalese servant, for there was but one guest in the verandah, a red-faced, military-looking man, whose merriment vanished as he caught sight of Harry.

'Bay Jove!' the stout man exclaimed, rising hurriedly and dropping his stick. 'Bay Jove—eh?'

And he looked from husband to wife.

Maria had risen also. She was dressed loudly, and wore jewellery at her throat, and bracelets on her white arms, which were bare in open elbow sleeves. Harry wondered whether her style had deteriorated with a strange rapidity, or whether he had hitherto failed to see her as she was. The laugh falling from the red lips now open in a momentary surprise had jarred on his nerves. Maria could not claim immunity from the laws of heredity—her mother had so laughed behind the bars at jokes, no doubt as delicately flavoured as that just compassed by the stout Adonis.

The lady recovered her presence of mind in an instant, as

ladies do, being more practised no doubt in the ways of being found out.

'Mr. Smither—my husband,' she said, with an introductory wave of the hand.

Harry bowed silently, while the stout gentleman gathered up his hat and stick.

'How do! eh? Bay Jove! must be going. D——n those steps! Bay Jove!' muttered Mr. Smither, stumbling backwards down the steps, and vanishing hastily by the garden.

'Well?' ejaculated Maria, turning fiercely on her husband.

'Well!' answered Harry, with a calmness which made his wife feel momentarily uneasy.

'What do you want here?' she asked, eyeing his shabby clothes with a faint look of scorn. And indeed they compared badly with her own finery.

'Not you,' answered Harry. 'We have done with each other.'

'For ever if my feelings are to be consulted. You are disgraced. It is a degradation to bear your name. A British officer, indeed! A pretty officer you are! Why, you have been turned out of the army.'

This was a guess, for the news, such as it was, could not have reached her. She accompanied the remark with a quick glance to see if the shot told, which, indeed, it did, as a shot may that is sent at random. Harry winced, although the words were untrue to the letter, but savouring, in the spirit, of that which had truly happened.

Then she hurled at him such a storm of vituperation as he had never conceived possible from the lips of a woman. She used words common enough, alas! in the mouths of those men who had been his companions, but of which Harry had deemed all women—even the lowest—happily ignorant. He had, doubtless, read in books, as we have, that a beautiful woman seems invariably to gather additional loveliness from a lapse into sudden passion. It may be so indeed in books, but not in real life. At all events, Maria's husband did not think her beautiful at this moment.

He was more astonished that she should speak such words than that they should be applied to him, and in this surprise her abuse lost a part of its sting. Most of it, indeed, had a modicum of truth—such a small germ of fact as women know best how to use, spreading it over a volume of deduction, so that the whole appears true. Without drawing upon her imagination,

however, Maria knew quite enough to make Harry quiver with shame at the memory perhaps of nothing so much as that he had once loved this woman. The deepest humiliation is the shame of having loved.

He was getting grey-haired, and his face too at this moment looked grey and weary.

'What do you want?' cried his wife scornfully. 'Why do you follow me? I suppose you want money. You look like it; and you haven't shaved this morning. I suppose your hand was too shaky!'

'I want nothing from you that I cannot pay for,' replied Harry in a broken voice. 'I have spoilt your life—perhaps. You may be right, Maria. I am sorry for it. But you have not made mine easy.'

Maria was looking at him with a queer speculation in her eyes. He had mentioned payment. He did not look as if he had money. Neither did she know that she possessed anything for which he might be prepared to offer a price. She was endowed, it will be seen, with a large common-sense, and reflected that it was better to talk things over quietly than to waste breath in vituperation. And although most ladies are constantly protesting that they have no heads for business, results go to prove that they frequently transact their own affairs with a remarkable shrewdness.

Maria's face softened a little.

'Well,' she said, 'what do you want?'

Harry, primed by the lawyer, opened, as it were, with his heavy guns.

'The settlement I made on you before our marriage was illegal,' said he. 'If I fight it I am, in the opinion of the best lawyers in India, bound to win.'

Maria shrugged her shoulders. What woman is afraid of legal cunning or backward to pit her own against it?

'The wording of the assignment as drawn up by your father,' said Harry, remembering his lesson as best he could, 'is not sound. And even if it were, the fact of its being drawn by him with the knowledge that he undeniably possessed at the time is sufficient to impair its validity.'

'Then you are going to fight?' Maria sneered, with a gleam of her pretty white teeth.

'Unless you agree to my proposal.'

Whereat Maria laughed scornfully, which served to conceal the curiosity she felt.

'I do not suppose I shall do that,' she said, with a great air of indifference, arranging the lace at her sleeve. 'I am not to be frightened by mere threats. What is your proposal?'

'I want the child,' replied Harry, who was too simple to carry concealment further. He trembled as he said it, and Maria, wondering a little at such feeling, of which the counterpart was doubtless excluded from her own heart by the strong common-sense which we have noticed, scarce believed him. To set a great price upon the possession of such an encumbrance as was at that moment sleeping on the floor of the next room under the dark eyes of the ayah seemed preposterous.

'What for?' she asked. For, with the simple, even cunning people are sometimes caught indulging in simplicity.

'To bring her up like a lady,' replied Harry, looking into her eyes. And she, with a self-command that did her credit, restrained the very obvious retort which was no doubt on the tip of so quick a tongue.

'You may have the child and welcome,' she said, 'on the terms you propose—but it must all be down in black and white,' added she, true to her father's teaching.

Harry thanked her clumsily enough, with a very honest joy glistening in his eyes as he rang the bell. When the servant appeared, which he did with singular rapidity, Harry instructed him to ask the gentleman who was waiting in the hall to come to number fourteen.

'We can settle it outright,' he said to his wife, with such evident delight that Maria began to wonder whether she ought to have held out for better terms. But she doubtless consoled herself with the reflection that Harry had nothing more to give.

'I have a lawyer here,' explained he further, 'who has made out the necessary agreements, and will witness the signature.'

The man of deeds appeared at this moment on the threshold and bowed to Maria, with whom he had danced many times in Calcutta. Maria had, indeed, numbered him, in her maiden meditations, among her many admirers, and had even informed herself of the prospects of a rising solicitor in India. His manner at this moment was full of promise for his future, inasmuch as he showed himself master of a most delicate situation. The bow on the threshold combined professional severity with personal admiration. As a lawyer he was strong, as a man he tacitly admitted to Maria that he was weak, and therefore enthralled by her beauty. With a strict faithfulness to his client he managed to convey to

Maria a subtle regret that he had been engaged, as it were, on the other side.

Thus this clever young man arranged a difficult matter with an apparent ease and the pleasantest manner in the world. At the same time the contract, which may or may not have been strictly legal, was very effectually executed.

He laid the blotting-paper almost affectionately upon Maria's name, and then stood upright, looking calmly at his client through a single eyeglass.

'And now,' he said softly, 'the child's ayah.'

The two men went into an adjoining room where they found the gentle native nurse seated on the floor beside her charge, and slowly waving a fan over the peaceful little head. The woman raised her glance for a moment only—indeed, there is no nurse so faithful as an ayah—and seeing Harry her deep, melancholy eyes lighted. She drew aside the lace covering with that soft touch which is so full of knowledge, and which black fingers can compass every whit as tenderly as the hand of an enlightened Christian mother.

Harry knelt down and buried his red face in the soft coverings, with an impetuous disregard for observation, which the single eyeglass contemplated with the large tolerance of one who has many clients, and sees them in unguarded moments.

The lawyer began at once a conversation with the ayah, but found that until he had taken notice of the baby he could make but little progress. Even this he did with a certain *savoir-faire*, and returned to the charge. The matter did not take many minutes, and it is probable that one so acute and discriminating as Harry's legal adviser avoided the mistake of attributing to his own eloquence the ayah's decision to accompany her small charge to that cold, grey country of the north, where she would have to brave curiosity and rudeness wherever she went.

'There, my dear sir,' said the lawyer to Harry in the hall, 'I think everything is fixed up. Do not lose that agreement. My fee is two hundred rupees. And I will be off to the harbour and find something to take me up to Madras.'

Harry paid him the two hundred rupees, and sent a message by him to the captain of the steamer, by which he intended to take passage for himself and his little daughter to Bombay, *en route* for the native country which he had left under a cloud more than five years earlier. The cloud in truth had spread and thickened until it obscured almost the entire heaven, but he felt, nevertheless some exultation as he thought of home.

There remained one duty—to bid his wife farewell. He found Maria in number fourteen in the act of locking away in her jewel-case the agreement signed by Harry.

‘I’ve come,’ he said slowly, ‘to say good-bye.’

‘Oh! good-bye,’ Maria answered carelessly, and the jewel-case shut with a snap, closing upon the result of Maria Lamond’s first venture in life. ‘I suppose,’ she went on, ‘you will take the child home to your—Miss Gresham?’

And Harry went out of the room, wondering why she supposed that.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### STARTING AFRESH.

ALMOST the last words of Frederic Marqueray to Harry on his departure had been urging him to go home and start the world afresh. Such false beginnings as Harry had made have indeed been retrieved frequently enough; and men have risen who, when they first took the road, had every appearance of going downhill.

Harry sailed from Bombay in the fine ship *Constance*, of nine hundred tons burthen, with his baby daughter and her native nurse. And after such varieties of fair and foul weather as have caused poets and others to liken a sea-voyage to a human life, they anchored off Gravesend, at which town the passengers were set ashore.

The day happened to be a Sunday. There was but one train, late in the evening. It was the month of November, and a river fog hung on the shipping at anchor. Harry was a stranger in this town, and knew not where to pass the time until the departure of the London train. The little party went therefore to the railway station, and there found refuge in a dismal waiting-room. The ayah was abashed by so many new sights, dazed by strange sounds, and shivering with cold. The child whimpered in its soft shawls, with a mournful little voice that would not cease complaining.

Such was the fresh start in life. And but for the little whimpering voice Harry would have sought consolation where he knew he could find it, at least for a time. But that small voice had a power over him, which Marqueray and other strong men had failed to exercise. Harry drew himself up, in his thin and somewhat shabby Indian tweeds, and would not give way to the temptation that flared across the road from the open door of an



hotel. It was a mere railway tavern, where he could not find asylum for his child.

He had been dreading that, which he knew must come to-morrow, with the slowly increasing fear that belongs to remorseful anticipation. He had at first reflected that he should see Miriam in perhaps three months. The months had slipped away, in the enforced idleness of the sea-voyage, until the dread moment lay a few weeks ahead. In less than twenty-four hours he must face Miriam now—and the man who had shown his courage among the heroes of the Mutiny, who had dared death a hundred times with a shout of exultation and a dauntless bearing, found himself face to face at last with abject fear.

During the miserable railway journey he sat in silence, and there doubtless fell about his ears during this time of retrospection the ruins of those vast edifices which we all build in the air when we are young, and of which the broken remains hinder our footsteps in later life.

At eleven o'clock the next morning Harry Wylam passed through the iron gateway of St. Helen's Place, which he had entered years earlier with his first black eye slowly swelling—his heart hot with the wild exultation of his first fight. He had fought, Heaven knows, many a fight since then, and had not always won. It was his heart that was swelling now, and not with pride. A few alterations caught his attention, but he did not heed them. Some of the quiet houses had been given over to the speculator to be converted into offices. But the porter's lodge was there, as, indeed, it is to-day, and Harry dared not give so much as a passing glance at the little square window where the gold-laced hat dimly notified the presence of the janitor. He walked on as if in a dream, or more, perhaps, as if half awake from a long sleep full of evil visions.

He glanced up at the window of Mr. Gresham's house, just as he had glanced, not so many years ago, to see if Miriam was there to note the grandeur of his new uniform and the swing of his great sword. He raised his hand to the knocker, and gave a sudden gulp at the sound it made. The door was opened with a swing, and half closed again at the sight of this shabby visitor. The man stood in the opening looking, not at Harry, but at his clothes.

'Well, young man?' he said.

It was Parks, who had helped him out of many a scrape and

connived at many a practical joke—Parks, who had brought him home from Chatham, adventurous and unashamed, who now did not recognise him.

‘Mr. Gresham in?’ asked Harry in a voice that he need not have attempted to disguise. His life had done that as effectually as it had altered his face.

‘No! Mr. Gresham is gone to his office.’ And the door was closed a little further.

‘Miss Miriam in?’

‘Yes,’ answered the butler, ‘but she won’t see the likes of you. What is your business? What’s yer name, anyway?’

‘Harry Wylam.’

The door was slowly opened and the old man backed against the wall, where he stood a broken figure, with his white head bowed.

‘Beg pardon, Mr. Harry,’ he said; ‘I didn’t recognise yer, not just at first. I see it’s you, now, sir. But——’

‘All right, Parks,’ said Harry, holding out his hand and taking the frail fingers in his. He did not wait for a further explanation; indeed, would have none of it. ‘Is Miss Miriam in the drawing-room?’

‘Yes, sir.’

The old servitor led the way upstairs. It seemed to Harry that nothing was altered in the house. He remembered the sense of cleanliness, the faint odour of furniture polish that had hovered on the stairs before he could walk them. As they mounted, the sound of the piano came to their ears. It was Miriam’s hour for practising. Her father still liked to hear her play the piano her mother had touched, after he had eaten his good dinner and solemnly sipped his two glasses of ’32 port.

The butler opened the door and went in.

‘Miss Miriam,’ he said, and that was all. But it was almost a cry.

Harry followed, and as the butler closed the door Miriam rose from the piano with a puzzled look. What struck Harry at once was her youth. He seemed to have lived so long—to be so old. And here was Miriam, youthful still, standing in a girlish attitude with one hand at the piano, it seemed on the threshold of life. Her poor face was of a piteous white. Thus they stood through interminable moments looking at each other. She knew him—had known him instantly—would have known him had his hair been white instead of grey, had he looked a hundred times shabbier and poorer and more broken.

Then suddenly he went forward and, casting himself on a sofa, buried his face in his arms, as Miriam had seen him do a dozen times in some boyish disgrace.

'Oh—Mim!' he cried in a broken voice. And that was all his greeting.

She stood at the piano shaking like a leaf, and spoke no word. She waited for him to lift that poor grey head, and who shall say what a wealth of pity and tenderness and love, ay! and of that forgiveness which only women compass, must have been hidden in her heart?

It was Harry who spoke first.

'I have left Ma—my wife,' he said. 'She—I couldn't live with her any longer. It is a miserable story, and very little of it is fit for your ears.'

He sat with dull eyes, to which the tears never came, looking round the room, of which the very atmosphere seemed to breathe of goodness and purity. Indeed, such a story as he had to tell was sadly out of place in this spot, and his lips were sealed by a sort of shame. All that had touched his life to mar it and stain it was irrevocably shut out from this pure house.

'No doubt it was a great deal my own fault,' he went on, in a quiet voice. 'But I have been punished for it, God knows.'

There was a little movement at the piano, where he would not look.

'I ought never to have married her,' he continued. 'I do not know why I did, and I suppose I have ruined your life.'

'No, you must not say that,' she protested, in a voice that had a strange ring—one would almost have thought of joy—in it. For a woman knows when he who speaks to her loves her, and gathers not always that knowledge from the words he says.

'I seem to be—possessed of a devil,' he said, with a sudden harsh laugh. 'I bring trouble to all who come near me.'

Miriam shook her head with a queer little smile, as if she had knowledge of some future which was withheld from him.

'And I have not come home alone,' he said; 'I have brought home my little girl.'

'Why?' asked Miriam, after a long pause, almost the question that Maria had asked. Harry made no answer, but sat with lowered eyes. And some woman's instinct told her the answer to the question she had put.

'Do you want me to take care of her, Harry?' asked she, in a low voice; and Harry nodded.

'I cannot think how I can ask you to do it,' he muttered, staring at the carpet and biting his thumb. 'But she is so helpless.'

'Yes, I know,' answered Miriam, in a voice which thrilled with heaven only knows what woman's dreams. For it is to heaven that such dreams belong, and the realisation of them on earth must, it seems, be part of Paradise. 'Where is she?'

'At the Golden Cross in Trafalgar Square.'

'Then I will go and bring her here,' said Miriam, going towards the door which he held open for her to pass out as if she had been a queen.

When she returned to the drawing-room she found it vacant, and on inquiring learnt that Harry had gone to Eastcheap to seek his guardian there.

Thither indeed he had hastened with a new dawn of hope in his heart. As he walked along the familiar streets through which he had passed as a boy on his way to school four times a day, there arose in his heart a strange inexplicable sense of exultation, the same sense that had made itself heard in Miriam's voice—a note as it were of joy in a chord of grief. Let those explain it who can.

Harry remained in the outer office, sending in a note by a new clerk, whose face was unfamiliar. There were many at the desks whom Harry knew. They seemed to be sitting in the same attitudes, writing in the same books, with the same pens. Some perchance might have known him had they looked up or had he emerged from the shadowy corner near the door which he had selected with the purpose of remaining unrecognised. He was kept waiting a long time, during which, no doubt, in the quiet of his own room, the stout old British merchant was waging a tough fight. For he had bidden this scapegrace go away never to return.

'Will you step this way?' said the new clerk, and Harry followed through the dimly lighted passage where the letter-books were stored on shelves near the ceiling.

Mr. Gresham, unaltered, save that perhaps he was a little stouter, stood gravely by his writing-table awaiting his visitor. He shook hands in silence, and motioned Harry to a chair.

'I have seen Miriam,' blurted out Harry honestly. 'I went there first.'

Mr. Gresham's kind face hardened a little.

'Ah!' he said, 'you used not to be a coward, Harry.'

'No, but I am now.'

He sat somewhat heavily on the chair reserved for influential business callers, and told Mr. Gresham the story he had not told Miriam. He told it as man to man, without extenuation, hiding nothing, suppressing nothing. And Mr. Gresham, leaning back in his chair with finger-tips pressed together—his attitude when puzzling out some commercial problem—wondered whether he had made some mistake far back at the beginning of Harry's education which had turned the whole life astray.

He listened to it all with a wonderful patience, and a tolerance which, like his frame, had grown broader with advancing years. He only made one comment.

'Your friend, Colonel Marqueray,' he said, 'must be worthy of all esteem.'

Then he asked one question.

'Where is the child?'

'Miriam has gone to fetch it from the Golden Cross Hotel,' Harry answered, looking anxiously at his guardian's face. But Mr. Gresham made no comment.

'You have no money?'

'None,' was the answer.

Mr. Gresham's cheque-book lay by his hand. He opened it, and signed a cheque for one hundred pounds.

'You will want money,' he said. 'You require new clothes.'

Harry blushed. He bent forward and took the money almost with eagerness. There was a queer light in his eyes, and his hand was unsteady.

'You will come to St. Helen's Place again,' said Mr. Gresham, with a largeness of heart which was not lost upon his hearer.

'No,' answered Harry quickly; 'I am not going there again. She thinks I am going back again—at once—this evening. But I am not.'

'She?' questioned Mr. Gresham.

'Miriam,' explained Harry with wavering glance. 'I am not going back to St. Helen's Place. I am going away from England at once.'

'Where to?'

'Oh—anywhere. The Cape will do.'

'And why are you going?' asked the old man with a cold wonder.

'I don't know.'

Harry rose, and held out his hand to say farewell.

'I don't know,' he repeated.

CHAPTER XXX.

WASHED ASHORE.

WHEN a man quits his native land and journeys in difficulty to a new country, with the comment that it 'will do,' it may be surmised that he leaves his heart behind him. Such a fresh start in life did Harry Wylam set about to compass from the moment that he was assured of his child's welfare in the house which had been his own childhood's home. Whether he returned to England with the decision already matured of quitting it again immediately seems doubtful. It is more probable that he acted thus, as at most junctures of his life, on the impulse of the moment. As a man journeys on through his years of existence he learns to know himself, if it so be that he fails—as many of us do—to form a new man of some sort or other. Harry knew his own nature well enough to be aware of the fact that in sudden temptation he usually succumbed. His was not a nature which may face temptation and take a Spartan pleasure in resisting it. He had failed so often that he now knew himself. The interview in the drawing-room of St. Helen's Place had convinced him in one flash of self-knowledge that he had awakened from the bad dream of his life in India to find that his real self was quite other, and that the one love of his life was, and ever would be, Miriam Gresham.

'No! By God!' he said to himself as he stepped on board the vessel in which he had taken passage to the Cape of Good Hope, 'I'll be a gentleman this time!'

Those who have had the patience to follow this record so far will not be surprised to hear that before the voyage was ended Harry had recovered his wild spirits in a great degree, and only at times gave way to humours of melancholy and depression. He soon became a favourite among his fellow-passengers, and his jolly laugh resounded sometimes through the ship.

At Cape Town he remained a few weeks, and there found a remittance awaiting him, forwarded in the kind forethought of his guardian (for so he continued to call honest John Gresham) by a steamer sailing after his vessel, and arriving at her destination a few weeks earlier. Harry wrote letters full of hope and cheery anticipation. The climate suited him; his health was already more satisfactory; it seemed probable that he would find

work without difficulty. He would write once a week. And at the end of a fortnight he drifted northward with the scum that ever floats on the wave of civilisation, and forgot his promise.

During the following five years those who watched and waited for news at home heard but little of him, and, indeed, such advices as they received scarce whetted their thirst for more. That perfect contentment with the interests in the immediate vicinity, which marks a shallow nature, seemed to increase its hold upon Harry as he grew older. His letters, never conspicuously coherent, or indeed notable for any one of the epistolary arts, made constant reference at this time to persons totally unknown to the recipients of the communications, and in such manner as to convey the impression that he was almost absorbed in the sayings and doings of those around him.

It was Mr. Gresham who heard from a trusted business connection in the Republic of Argentina, that a young lady of the name of Maria Lamond, whose father lived in a lordly fashion at the city of Rio de Janiero, had married a general of renown in South America, who was spoken of as the future president of the Spanish colony. After mature consideration, the City merchant forwarded this information to Harry, but refrained at that time from telling Miriam. Harry received the letter in due course, and laughed recklessly at its news. He was at that time working as team-driver to a Dutch farmer, and, having recovered his strength, was deemed a man of some importance in a land where physical power, a great courage, and faultless marksmanship were held in highest esteem.

It was shortly after this that he fell seriously ill, and once more approached the threshold of death. His employers treated him with a great kindness which was not entirely attributable to the fact that Mr. Gresham's remittances of money still came to hand regularly, to be spent lavishly at once. The daughter of his employer—a heavy-faced Dutch maiden who, perhaps, possessed a warm heart—was especially devoted to his welfare, never leaving his bedside by night or day until the danger was overpast.

The team-driver, whose name was a byeword for all that was wild and reckless and daring, recovered therefore his strength, and had been at work some days when his employer called him aside.

'When are you going to marry that girl?' he asked in a thick voice, standing squarely in front of Harry.



‘Never,’ Harry returned stoutly.

‘You’ll marry that girl.’

‘I’m d——d if I do,’ retorted Harry, with a laugh, whereat the farmer struck at him heavily, and announced his intention of killing him.

So Harry, half recovered from his sickness, fought the Dutch farmer, and whipping him, left him lying insensible before his own door.

Again he drifted northwards, whither the tide of rascaldom seemed ever flowing, and the whole of his next remittance from London was sent back to the Dutch farmer, who accepted the gift with the strong common-sense that so often overrules pride. A portion of the money was spent in a new dress of the brightest magenta for the girl whose cause had been so stoutly upheld by her father, and doubtless brought much consolation to that maiden. Even a broken heart may beat at the sight of a new bonnet.

Two years after this an enthusiastic young colonial bishop, making his way northward, like a sleuth-hound on the scent of sin, met in the open veldt a single wagon slowly moving southward. As ships upon the sea meeting in mid-ocean joyfully clew up sails and pause to exchange news of the busy world, so the wagons on the great plains of Southern Africa naturally made halt, and the travellers drew together.

The bishop, with his rifle on his shoulder, his jacket pockets impartially stuffed with cartridges and tracts, went forward on foot to meet the small wagon, which seemed to be in the sole charge of a native driver.

After the customary greetings the divine turned his thoughts to the business that called him to wander, not disdaining in his young enthusiasm to cast seed on the wayside. He was searching among his store of devotional literature for something suitable for a native team-driver who could not read, when the curtain of the tent was drawn aside, and the face of a white man appeared in the dim recesses of the interior.

‘Whom have you there?’ asked the bishop.

‘The man that breaks the stones for the road up at Happywith, the next station. He’s mighty sick, that man. I’m taking him down to Oomstrand to the doctor.’

The bishop went forward to the wagon.

‘Are you an Englishman?’ he asked.

‘Yes, are you a doctor?’

'No, I'm only a parson. Can I do anything for you?'

The man shook his head.

'Not yet,' he answered, with a laugh. 'But I think I shall have something in your line before long, unless we get to Oomstrand pretty quickly.'

The bishop, with somewhat boyish activity, hoisted himself up to the shaft of the wagon, where he sat with his legs dangling.

'Excuse me,' said he, with the quiet assurance of his cloth, 'but it seems to me that you are a gentleman.'

'Was once,' the sick man answered, passing a thin hand over his brow and curly hair that was almost white. 'I was in the army, and fought in the Mutiny. My name is Harry Wylam. I was cashiered for looting.'

'And were you guilty?' asked the man of God.

'Yes.'

Harry was lying back on his rough bed, with parted lips and half-closed eyes. The excitement of this little incident, common enough on the wagon track, seemed to have overpowered him. Presently his eyes closed, and the bishop slipped quietly to the ground. An hour and more elapsed before Harry stirred. And when he did so, the kind English voice aroused him to a full consciousness.

'Here—wake up—I have some strong soup waiting for you. There's brandy in it. It will do you good. I have turned my wagon round and am going back to Oomstrand with you. You are one of my parishioners, you know.'

After the soup Harry seemed stronger, and even showed some inclination to talk. The afternoon was wearing on, and in the cool of the evening it was the bishop's intention to make a move. The oxen were feeding with that contemplative calm which belongs to the bovine race, while the native teamsman slept in the shadow of the wagons.

The bishop, having despatched a hearty meal while Harry slept, now lighted his pipe, and climbed to the shaft of the wagon.

'Better now?' he inquired cheerily.

'Yes,' answered Harry, with a look of rest in his eyes.

'Funny thing we've never met before,' went on the other; 'I have been up and down this country these last two years.'

'I have seen you pass—when I was breaking stones on the road,' said Harry with his laugh, which sounded strange enough from such blanched lips.

'Have you no friends at home to whom I could write and tell your state? You will not be fit to work for some months. Surely your people at home would be glad to hear of you, or sorry to hear of your sickness,' said the good Samaritan, without taking his pipe from his lips, and bluffly and honestly as man to man.

Harry made no answer, but lay back on his rough pillows deep in thought.

'Parents dead?' inquired the younger man.

'Yes,' Harry answered. 'Thank God, they died when I was a child.'

'Is there nobody, then?'

Harry did not speak for some time. He turned over and found that his face was close to his companion's elbow, who sat smoking and gazing abstractedly out over the rolling veldt now shimmering in the sunshine.

'Did you ever hear of John Gresham, of St. Helen's Place in London?' asked the sick man.

'Yes,' answered the other; 'I was curate in a City church before I came here, and I met Mr. Gresham then.'

'Will you write to him—when we get to Oomstrand?'

The bishop was silent for some moments. Then he laid his strong brown hand on Harry's shoulder.

'Mr. Gresham died two years ago—when I was last in England.'

Harry turned away, so that his face was hidden against the canvas of the wagon-cover, and his companion sat smoking and looking out over the veldt.

'And his daughter?' said Harry suddenly in a broken voice.

'She was well. I knew her only by sight. I used to see her in church, when by chance I officiated at St. Helen's. I did so when I was last in England. And there was a child—a little girl adopted by Mr. Gresham, I believe.'

'What was she like—the little girl—was she dark?' asked the broken voice.

'No; she was fair, with blue eyes.'

The sick man gave a queer laugh, which set his companion thinking.

'Was Miss Gresham going to be married?' asked the bishop's patient after a pause.

'No; her friends say she will never marry.'

The two men were silent for some time, and presently the bishop, noticing that Harry had fallen asleep, himself lay down

in the shadow of the wagon, and rested during the heat of the afternoon. He was astir again before sunset, and aroused the men.

When Harry awoke from his slumber his newfound friend was sitting beside him, and again offered him food, which in pure exhaustion the sick man swallowed.

'Did you ever hear the name of Marqueray?' Harry asked of the only gentleman with whom he had conversed for many years.

'All Englishmen know that name,' was the reply. 'He is one of the great commanders out in India.'

'Only man I was ever afraid of,' commented Harry with a little laugh, and turning over he fell asleep again.

He did not stir when, at sunset, a start was made; and during the journey across the moonlit veldt, which lasted until dawn, he made no answer when addressed by his companions.

It was nearly daylight when the wagons reached the small town of Oomstrand, and drew up before the only inn.

The bishop went to Harry's vehicle, and unstrapped the flap of the covering which had been closed against the heavy dew. He drew aside the soaking canvas, and found that that which had been adrift so long had reached the shore at last.

THE END.

## *Haytime.*

HEY, lads, ho, lads,  
 Why are you so slow, lads?  
 Darkly the shadows creep over the day;  
 The oxen all bellow,  
 The sunset's all yellow,  
 Rain is a-coming to ruin the hay.  
     You mischievous lasses,  
     That scatter the grasses,  
 Let the lads bustle, have done with your play;  
     You pitchers and rakers,  
     You merry haymakers,  
 Load up the wagon, and home with the hay.

Nay, Joe, stay, Joe,  
 Never slip away, Joe,  
 Must you be tied like a sow by the leg?  
 While you are a-drinking  
 The sun'll be sinking;  
 Work must be done before tapping the keg.  
     You mischievous lasses,  
     That scatter the grasses,  
 Let the lads bustle, have done with your play;  
     You tossers and takers,  
     You merry haymakers,  
 Clear the 'Four Acres,' and home with the hay.

Soa, Dobbin, woa, Dobbin,  
 'Tisn't time to go, Dobbin;

## HAYTIME.

Wait till the wagon's heaped higher than now,  
 At home, in a minute  
 You'll have your nose in it,  
 Grudging a morsel to Grizzle, the cow.  
     You mischievous lasses,  
     That scatter the grasses,  
 Let the lads bustle, have done with your play  
     You pitchers and rakers,  
     You merry haymakers,  
 Load up the wagon, and home with the hay.

Fie, Molly! why, Molly,  
 Clamour so, and cry, Molly,  
 'Puddings a-spoiling and pies getting cold'?  
     You ninny to grumble  
     When thunderstorms rumble—  
 There's the first drop as you dawdle and scold!  
     You mischievous lasses,  
     That scatter the grasses,  
 Let the lads bustle, have done with your play;  
     You tossers and takers,  
     You merry haymakers,  
 Clear the 'Four Acres,' and home with the hay.

'Rough,' Johnny? Stuff, Johnny;  
 Never mind a cuff, Johnny;  
 She'll come a-coaxing you soon, by the barn.  
     You catch her and kiss her,  
     There'll nobody miss her,  
 Dick'll be singing or Jock at his yarn.  
     You mischievous lasses,  
     That scatter the grasses,  
 Let the lads bustle, have done with your play;  
     You pitchers and rakers,  
     You merry haymakers,  
 Load up the wagon, and home with the hay,

Oh, Gaffer, go, Gaffer,  
Don't worry so, Gaffer,  
Off to the missis, you hinder us here ;  
Just hurry and tell her  
To fetch from the cellar  
Prime of the cider and best of the beer.  
    You mischievous lasses,  
    That scatter the grasses,  
Let the lads bustle, have done with your play ;  
    You tossers and takers,  
    You merry haymakers,  
Clear the ' Four Acres,' and home with the hay.

Quick, lads! thick, lads,  
Pile it on the rick, lads,  
Neatly and nattily comb it away ;  
And show me to beat it,  
When we shall complete it,  
Neater, or sweeter, or wholesomer hay.  
    You mettlesome lasses,  
    That clatter of glasses  
Calls you to supper, go, make yourselves gay ;  
    You shakers and rakers,  
    You jolly haymakers,  
Lustily strike up the song of the hay.

A. H. BEESLY.



## Oliver Wendell Holmes.<sup>1</sup>

THE Life is well-written, and with sincere feeling: but nothing in it so gets home to one's heart as the Autocrat's own anticipations of what has come at last always did to some readers. The eyes are moistened yet, looking at certain passages both in prose and rhyme. He continually anticipated the great change, and the shading-off into it from this life: sometimes with a simple pathos, sometimes with a humour near akin to tears. One thinks of Thomas Hood, in his last illness, drawing the picture of himself lying at rest. And he began soon: as lesser men do. *The Iron Gate* was published in 1881. The little volume, which bears a portrait far more pleasing than either of those given in the Biography, is made precious by the inscription in the clear open hand-writing, 'with the kindest regards and remembrances of Oliver Wendell Holmes. Boston, May 22d, 1882.' Already, with more than twelve years of life before him, he was steadily looking onward. *The Last Survivor* was written for the annual meeting of the Class of 1829, in January 1878. Then *The Archbishop and Gil Blas: a modernised Version*: came in January 1879. And now the lovable old man who made warm friends wherever our language is spoken, has gone on a little before. The expected has arrived.

Yes! the vacant chairs tell sadly we are going, going fast,  
And the thought comes strangely o'er me who will live to be the last?  
When the twentieth century's sunbeams climb the far-off eastern hill,  
With his ninety summers burdened will he greet the morning still?

Will he stand with Harvard's nurselings when they hear their mother's  
call,  
And the old and young are gathered in the many-alcoved hall?  
Will he answer to the summons when they range themselves in line,  
And the young moustachioed marshal calls out 'Class of 29'?

<sup>1</sup> Life and Letters of Oliver Wendell Holmes: By John T. Morse, Jr. In Two Volumes. London: Sampson Low, Marston & Co. 1896.

For many years, the portrait of the Autocrat of the Breakfast Table, given me by himself, has looked down on my work in my study each day I could be there. Doctor Holmes grew always better-looking as he grew older. And the hard brain-worker's hair remained abundant to the last. The portrait in 1850 is not attractive. The portrait in 1892 is much more pleasing. In all the likenesses, there is in one respect a singular resemblance to the portraits of Gibbon. It was said of Gibbon that the tip of his nose was the centre of his face. So with the beloved O. W. H. It is an arrangement {not commonly desirable. The Autocrat sometimes expressed the wish that he had been more impressive, both in face and figure. None who knew him ever wished him other than he was as he lived.

I have many of his letters. He had written frequently, and long letters, for thirty-four years. Knowing how busy a man he was, I thought it wonderful that he wrote at such length. I have remarked that many men who write for the press, are plainly indisposed to write anything which is not to be printed. I was not quite Half-Way when he first wrote to me: and it was received as the most cheering of all possible praise when he said, in the old *Fraser* days, that reading certain passages in the present writer's essays, he felt that he must (on some day he could not remember) have written them himself. I certainly had not presumed to obtrude myself on his notice. But I always felt a remarkable sympathy with him: not least in that early anticipation of things sure to be. And I was well aware that the Autocrat, like lesser men, never expressed a moiety of what he had thought and felt. There was reality in all these lines. It was not in the least as when young folk utter bogus sentimentalism about *Passing away*. Keats was very young, indeed, when he said in simple earnestness, 'I feel the daisies growing over me.' But then he was dying. And that makes all the difference.

Doctor Holmes gave me all his books: two copies of some of them. They fill a shelf: very accessible. The first came on October 1, 1861. It was the grand edition of *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table*: 'with the kindest regards of Oliver Wendell Holmes.' The inscription never was 'From the Author:' it always gave the name. The next was the handsome little volume, *The Poems of Oliver Wendell Holmes*. Now, 'With the kind regards of his friend, O. W. Holmes. Boston, June 1862.' I was proud to get the books: but the letters of those days spoke of long-published volumes with a kindness so excessive that they

broke one down. Yet I never saw him but once : when on a blazing June day I travelled with him 'on the cars' from Edinburgh to Crewe. There we parted : I to Lichfield, he to Oxford to receive his D.C.L. His daughter was with him. The last I saw of them was standing bewildered on the platform amid piles of luggage. The view remains vivid in memory. My carriage went on : but he had to turn out. And Crewe, to the unaccustomed visitor, is a perplexing station. As I moved away, he and his daughter were standing, no man caring for them, by a truck which bore their abundant luggage. People were rushing wildly about the platforms, and trains hurrying in and out. In humorous despair, the Autocrat held up both hands on high, and exclaimed 'I don't know at all where I am going.' And so I left him. He had come, as an old man, to England for just three months. Mr. Froude and I had called on him in London, but missed him. And he asked me to a garden-party, somewhere, but I could not go. He was quite the lion of that London season. I wonder how many of the big people who made much of him had ever read his books. He deserved anything : but some were surprised. One of the most popular authors of the day said to me that it was strange that the visitor from the States met such adulation, while English authors who had done an immense deal more, were made nothing of. But, as Dean Stanley was wont to say, 'It's all Election !' The Calvinism, which the Autocrat so detested, is here as a matter of fact. Some call it Providence. Some call it Chance. They mean the same thing : to wit, that it is a toss-up how things shall go.

It appeared strange to read in the Preface to the Life that 'letter-writing was an irksome task' to Doctor Holmes ; and that 'therefore his letters were few.' It was not so in my experience. But my experience must have been exceptional : for the biographer knew the Autocrat's ways incomparably better than I did. I had wondered at the long letters, written in such a legible and unhurried hand. I know people to whom letter-writing is indeed a most irksome task. But then their letters are extremely short, and plainly written with the greatest possible rapidity. To get at their meaning is all one can do. And that demands repeated perusals. Some folk, when they receive an illegible letter, unless it comes from a very big person indeed, are in use to cast it unread into the waste-paper basket. Helps used to say it was impertinent to send a letter which cost an effort to read. And an old friend, in my youth, said the same thing in much

stronger language. His judgment was entitled to great consideration. For he left more than a million. And a most eminent moderator of the Kirk has given the world a remarkable verse, in a remarkable poem; very touching in its character; and seemingly consonant with the belief of certain theologians:

Who says he was a man of wrath?

Exclaimed the loud MacPhun:

He, certes, is a man of God,

Who's worth a million pun'!

I fear it must be acknowledged that these two volumes are dull in the main. The true Life of the Autocrat is brightly given in the books he wrote. All the life-like touches are to be found there. Mr. Morse has done his work as well as such work could be done, and there is no lack of admiration and affection for his illustrious relative. But he could do no more than sketch a quite uneventful career. Holmes was forty-eight before *The Autocrat* made him famous. As I have ventured to say that no biography can be truly and fully written, I note with satisfaction that Holmes thought so too. 'There are but two biographers who can tell the story of a man's or a woman's life. One is the person himself or herself: the other is the Recording Angel.' 'I should like to see any man's biography with corrections and emendations by his ghost. We don't know each other's secrets quite so well as we flatter ourselves we do.' The biographer who is practically possible would not tell his story. A very wise and good man, who filled a great earthly place, said to me more than once or twice, 'I put no secrets into my diary.' And yet it was a very full narrative of outward events, and is being used just in these days to furnish material for his Life. Now the outward history of Oliver Wendell Holmes was singularly uneventful. As his biographer says, in words to be judiciously understood, 'Nothing ever happened to him.' There was a little perplexity in the choice of a profession; but nothing like the agony some have known at the great dividing of the ways in life. He spent two years of his youth in Europe, studying medicine. Three months he was again in the Old World as an old man. All the rest of his days were spent in Boston, or near it. And his lot was the neither poverty nor riches of Agur's prayer. He was never 'in the enjoyment of ample means,' as Archbishop Tait said. But he never knew the pinch of poverty. The title of his memoir is *The Life and Letters*. It would not have done, here, to say *The Life and*

*Adventures.* There were none. And yet, doubtless, to the hero himself, the life was full of excitement. The quietest professional career is so. Some stay-at-home souls would say to Mr. Morse, Do not speak of nothing happening to him. Things happened which were very great under that roof. After many years of married life, his wife died. His father and mother had gone, long before. And two of three children predeceased him, an aged man. Such events are not spoken of. But they are the things which make it impossible to write a biography whose hero would feel that on those pages his true story was told at all.

We need not linger on the genealogy. His father was 'the most delightful of sunny old men:' albeit a preacher of frightful dogmas which he who believes should never smile. Oliver Wendell Holmes was born at Cambridge, Massachusetts, August 29, 1809: the year of Abraham Lincoln, Tennyson, and Gladstone. He might have been a clergyman, but for being terrified by certain he knew as a boy: and he would have made a charming and helpful preacher. His theory of this universe was 'confused' in those early days. The Deity was an old man, as shown in pictures he had seen: angels, demons, and men, were his subjects. The boy was superstitious. To the end, no inducement would have made him sleep in a solitary house. Others know the feeling. He was taught the Shorter Catechism. Can I take it in that for years of my boyhood I had to repeat one half of that work each Sunday? And after being a Doctor of Divinity for thirty-two years, when I want a clear view of a difficult doctrine, I still get it by recalling the Westminster answer on that point. 'We learned nominally that we were a set of little fallen wretches, exposed to the wrath of God by the fact of that existence which we could not help. I do not think we believed a word of it.' Then a statement which exactly corresponds to one's own experience. 'Sermons I had had enough of from the pulpit. I don't know that I ever read one sermon of my own accord during my childhood.' I am perfectly sure I never did. Well I remember thinking, as a little boy, that if preachers desired to make their sermons as dull and stupid as they could make them, they could do no more. It seemed strange to behold a preacher roaring away to a large congregation, not one soul listening to a word he said, and he appearing quite contented.

'It was a New England doctrine that a child must repent of, and be punished for, not only his own sins but those of his first parent. This was the foundation of the condemnation of unborn

and unbaptised children, as taught in the *Day of Doom*, the celebrated poem of Michael Wigglesworth.' As though it were proposed to hang our most popular Edinburgh preacher, because his ancestor was a sheep-stealer and was duly hanged for being so. It seems strange to me to remember that when I had an Edinburgh parish, a most deplorable preacher whose church was empty found bitter fault with the Prayer-book of the Church Service Society, because the confessions provided merely made mention of our own wrong-doings, but said nothing of the fact that we were very wicked to start with, in consequence of Adam's Fall. I ventured to say that I thought it enough to confess the ill we had ourselves done, without confessing that done by somebody else. I suggested that if a lot of watches went to the watch-maker to confess their sins, it would suffice if they stated humbly that they had not kept time nearly so well as they might have done: while if they stated that they were very badly made to begin with, it appeared that this would be confessing the watch-maker's short-coming, who had made them so. The venerable parson with the empty kirk (mine was full) did not attempt to explain my difficulty. But he at once proceeded to bully me. He asseverated that what I had said was 'blasphemous:' and that if I dared to say it again I should be deposed, and deprived of my living. It was much easier to do that, than to answer what I had suggested. His threat produced no effect whatever. As for the accusation of blasphemy, I could not say *tu quoque*. For I held that he was a blasphemer (if the thing be possible) and that I was not.

At this early stage, O. W. H. had arrived at the continually-stated principle of the saintly Thomas Erskine. 'No punishment: all education.'

He graduated at Harvard College in the famous 'Class of 29.' He then began the study of law, but soon gave it up for that of medicine. In 1833 he sailed for Europe, taking 23 days for the voyage. He worshipped one Sunday in Salisbury Cathedral: and made the terribly mistaken statement that he 'had the luxury of a benediction from a Lord Bishop who receives 15,000*l.* a year.' Somebody had told the youth so. He studied medicine diligently at Paris: came to know that city as well as he did Boston; and to speak French well. *Me voilà revenu* was his announcement that he had got back to his home in the autumn of 1835. The voyage was 43 days. He was duly impressed by the interior of Westminster Abbey, where he heard 'a stupid sermon' from the



Bishop of Gloucester of that day. He thought little of the 'notorious' Edward Irving. 'The charlatan he most resembles is Mr. —, whose yell is, however, instinct with a profounder expression of vulgarity and insolence.' So Canning and Wilberforce must have chanced on a better day.

In 1836, Doctor Holmes began practice in Boston. He ought to have been most successful: but he never attained more than 'a fair business.' He had published a volume of verses, and people were afraid of him. Medicine is like Law: and the young Sir Walter wrote 'Who would give a brief to the author of *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*?' But he drove about at a tremendous rate in 'a chaise,' to his own enjoyment and the terror of passers-by. The vehicle was plainly what Carlyle called a gig. In 1837, he became Professor of Anatomy in Dartmouth College, and in 1847 he attained the like chair in Harvard, and held it for thirty-five years. In June 1840 he married: finding, like many others, 'the ideal wife.' Already he had begun to suffer from asthma, as he did to the end. When he had climbed the long stair to his lecture-room, he had to sit awhile before he could speak. His lectures were always most lively and interesting. And now, American-fashion, he took to lecturing in another way. Here he was very popular, but he liked it not. Mr. Lowell had tried the like work: and his words abide:

'To be received at a bad inn by a solemn committee, in a room with a stove that smokes but not exhilarates, to have three cold fishtails laid in your hand to shake, to be carried to a cold lecture-room, to read a cold lecture to a cold audience, to be carried back to your smoke-side, paid, and the three fishtails again—well, it is not delightful exactly.'

The day was in which Tulloch and I were offered liberal terms to lecture in the States. Tulloch wished to go: and Shairp often pressed upon me that I might get money enough to restore the parish-church, A.D. 1112. That was a generation back. I am thankful I did not go. For indeed I am such a sailor that I probably should never have got there. And then, judging from Mr. Lowell's words, so manifestly true, I should certainly never have got back. Further, it is 'All Election' whether a lecturer shall succeed or not. Kingsley failed, utterly. And yet, the kind unknown friends who speedily bought twenty-three editions of a two-dollar volume of *Essays* might have turned out in cheering numbers: not knowing, till they had actually listened to it, how bad the lecture would be. Though the pecuniary



risk would not have been met by me, one could not have borne to see one's manager looking daily more miserable, as his hope of gain faded away.

The biographer says, quite frankly, that the only thing which would have made Doctor Holmes go about the country lecturing was, that he needed the money. And these absences must have told against his practice as a medical man.

But his day came. He was within two years of what he called 'the five-barred gate:' the age of fifty.

'His name had scarcely been heard outside of the small town of Boston. There his friends knew him only as a clever man, a medical professor who lectured creditably, a poet whose lines were good enough to have been once or twice gathered into a volume, a shrewd humourist, a merry wit, delightful in the chance encounter, not to be surpassed at the dinner-table, and of much usefulness upon so-called "occasions." It was a sufficiently pleasant and satisfactory life, from day to day and year to year, if one had no especial ambition. . . . Yet the discovery was about to be made, as unexpectedly to himself and others, as when the ordinary pasture is suddenly discovered to be pregnant with gold.'

In 1857, the famous magazine, *The Atlantic Monthly*, was started: Holmes suggested the title. Mr. Lowell was Editor; and he insisted that Holmes should be a contributor. 'I said to myself, Too late, too late.' Lowell insisted. And that renowned series of papers began, which all the world knows as *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table*. The volume has become a classic. The religious papers ran it down, to the extent of their power. But it took hold: though adversely reviewed in many quarters. I remember well the first sight of it, as a volume published by Mr. Strahan who started *Good Words*. The year on the Edinburgh title-page is 1859. For years, it was advertised with some words of mine, made somewhat more absurd than as I had written them. I had said that I had more enjoyment in that volume than in all the writings of Shelley put together; and I explained what I meant in so speaking. But I have before me at this moment the advertisement in Mr. Strahan's list: 'In neat cloth, price 2s. 6d.' Then the title of the volume: and the appalling statement, 'I would rather be the author of the Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table than of all Shelley's writings put together.' Then *Fraser's Magazine* was given as the place where that was said: and my initials, still known to some. Mr. Froude was the kindest of

Editors, and never altered a word. But for my own sake, he would not have suffered that to pass: I am certain.

It is a singular mode of living which is shown in the clever and cheery volume: a mode of living absolutely unknown in Britain. And the moral atmosphere is essentially that of New England. But there is the revolt against the Calvinism which once prevailed there, of a soul that had suffered under it. Henceforward, Doctor Holmes was known as *The Autocrat*: and every one knows how the series of like books went on. Till now, where known at all as an author, it was as a writer of verse. But his fame was to rest mainly on his prose. The Saturday Club was a pleasant gathering of eminent Boston men. Here, he 'talked more than most': some ventured to say 'talked too much.' One quite understands. He began to fall asleep in church during the sermon: as an entire congregation did in a Scottish Kirk on a summer day. The minister paused: and when the people were waked by silence, said it was sad to see that the only person awake was the parish idiot. But that soul objected to be made an example, even of well-doing. In a loud voice he exclaimed, 'If I had not been an idiot, I should have been sleeping too.' Considerable sharpness was left in that unfurnished mind.

One is startled by the statement that Holmes was content to spend his life 'in a little, out-of-the-way town.' A gazetteer, published in 1888, makes the population of Boston above 390,000. And it is certainly, intellectually, the metropolitan city of the vast United States. I suppose it is modest in a Boston man to depreciate the renowned city: much as a Scotch farmer, riding a horse seventeen hands high, will say to one commending the animal, 'Yes, it is a nice powny.'

The powerful story, finally known as *Elsie Venner*, had for its central idea one which might easily have grown repulsive. But it was handled with great delicacy and skill. And now a loud cry was raised against the Autocrat's religious teaching. The people who raised it must have been incredibly bigoted and stupid. The special heresy was where he ventured to say that God would never make a man with a crooked spine, and then punish him for not standing upright: further, that if the crook was in the brain instead of the spine, it would be allowed for too. By that time, Scotland was emancipated. I said at the time, in the most public fashion, that the Autocrat's doctrine appeared to me a good deal more certain than that two and two make four: and no mortal found fault. About that epoch, Dr. Guthrie of Edinburgh said in a sermon

that some thought half the race would be sent to hell. But that it would be a dismal account of any worldly government, that it could go on only with half its subjects in penal slavery: and he would never believe the like of God Almighty. When I quoted the words with approval to an aged parson with an empty church, his reply was, 'We all know Guthrie has no logic.' In fact, he believed that at least ninety-nine in each hundred were appointed to eternal torture, and held in the way thereto. In my experience, the look-out would be black indeed for most preachers of general damnation, if this great doctrine were true. I recall a bright day on which I was walking amid budding woods with one of the greatest of all preachers. He told me he had been reading the Book of Mormon: and amid much rubbish he found one statement which he read with cordial Amen. 'All who say that children dying in infancy are damned, will be damned themselves.'

It is interesting to find how the Autocrat's view as to suffering came to coincide with that continually sent out from Linlathen: he probably never having heard of Thomas Erskine. Also how he valued the brilliant and charming Phillips Brooks. Still he clung to King's Chapel, where the teaching was Unitarian: yet not Socinian. In 1882, the day had come when he could declare, in the preface to a new edition of his well-known book, 'I can say without offence to-day that which called out the most angry feelings and the hardest language twenty-five years ago.' For then, indeed, it was often stated that O. W. H. would assuredly 'go to hell.'

Poetic talent is widely diffused in America. In that quarter of a century, Holmes was asked to read the manuscript verses of five thousand young poets. And to a lady who brought her complaint to him he wrote wise words: 'I do not see how you can help yourself if an editor alters your papers, except by becoming so important to him that you can make it a condition of publishing your articles that they shall not be in any way tampered with.' It may be esteemed as certain that it was not the Autocrat who ventured in this biography to alter one of Milton's most famous lines. It stands, sad to say, 'So thick a drop *severe* has quenched their orbs.' But it was the lovable genius himself who (at p. 46 of Vol. II.) has awfully transmogrified a most familiar line of Anacreon, making it in fact not a verse at all.

I found out, in my one long talk with 'The Doctor' (constantly so called), one thing emphasised in his Life: his love of great trees. As some can give with painful accuracy, the dimen-

sions of all Cathedral churches, so he the height and reach of those magnificent vegetables. Near his country home at Beverly was 'the finest oak he could remember.' He added, 'I never pass it without a bow and a genuflection.' It was Wordsworth who said, 'Cut down that tree! I'd sooner fall down and worship it!' Yet Holmes felt how a tree, centuries old, holds off a poor transient mortal. To a friend: 'Ah, you think that you own that tree. But you don't: *it owns you!*'

He disliked, keenly, that fashion of tampering with the English language which compels certain persons at once to close a book printed in America. Curiously, he condemned, severely, the use of 'Proven' for proved: even on Lowell's page. He knew not that the word is classical in Scotland. The intermediate verdict of a Jury, permitted north of the Tweed, is *Not Proven*. The words are capable of various interpretations. 'No doubt you did it; but there is hardly what may be called legal evidence, and we don't like to hang a poor creature.' I think I have known it mean, 'Poisoned the man, and served him right.'

Not all his jokes were good. Some were very bad. 'Did not Alexander the Great inherit his tendency to get drunk from his father, the notorious *Fill-up of Macedon?*' But one recalls some of Swift's classical derivations. *All eggs under the grate* may pass. But what of *Pail-up and ease us*, whence *Peloponnesus*? What, of Socrates' remark on Epaminondas? 'No originality about him: just an imitation of myself: in fact, an *Ape o' mine own days?*'

Then when a canvasser came, worrying him to subscribe to a huge dictionary, 'I'm too old,—eighty years,—shan't live to see it finished.' 'Nay, Doctor: you won't have to live so very much longer to use our book: we've already got to G.' 'And you may go to L, if you like.' The canvasser 'went—somewhere.' That last humorous sally is the biographer's. The facts bring back a story which Mr. Froude told me, solemnly, thirty years ago. An old gentleman, just arrived by a train from Devonshire, came in great wrath to a Great Western office at Paddington station. 'A porter has insulted me, grossly. I asked him to get my luggage: and he just said *Go to hell.*' The porter was sent for. 'I spoke most civilly to the gentleman.' In those days the initial letter of the passenger's name was affixed to his boxes; thus it was easy to sort out the luggage at the journey's end. 'I asked the gentleman what his name was. He said Lloyd. Then I told him to go to L and he would find his things.' The old gentleman was a

humourist. He departed, quite pleased; having handsomely tipped the poor porter. Then Froude laughed: with that laugh which his friends remember.

Quite small men occasionally find it necessary to expedite the departure of a bore; and it is both interesting and helpful to be told how big men do so. Doctor Holmes kept on hand a little pile of autograph extracts from his writings, and when the visitor had reached the extreme limit of a call, yet seemed unaware of the fact, would kindly hand him one of these extracts, courteously asking him to take it as a keepsake. 'They can't stop after that, however tough,' he said. 'I call the extracts my *lubricant*: it greases the way to send them off.' I know a humble Scotch parson who in such a case arises and says: 'But I must not detain you any longer.' Bishop Harvey Goodwin of Carlisle told me how an extremely eminent man in the Anglican hierarchy used to do. Getting upon his feet, and affectionately taking the visitor's hand in both of his, he said, in a tremulous voice, 'And must you go away?' Then the Bishop of Carlisle (it was at Bishop Wordsworth's table) arose, warmly grasped my right hand, and went through the entire proceeding with a saddened face. I could not but say that had the great man so addressed my lowly self, I should have hastened to reply, 'I was just going; but as you seem so anxious I should stay with you, I can wait a little longer.' The sentimental expression passed from Bishop Goodwin's strong face; and he rejoined, with firmness, 'You couldn't say that, if you saw the way in which the Exarch did it all.' And I am entirely convinced the Bishop was right. Some men can carry a thing off: others cannot. I well remember how Guthrie brought the tears to all eyes, by saying, when the kindest of philanthropists told him he was looking remarkably well, 'Oh, Miss Marsh, I'm a great imposter!' There was inexpressible pathos in the voice; and the accent was of his native land. Let the reader just try, experimentally, whether he can touch or not, by saying, 'I'm a great impostor.' Possibly the listeners may be touched, but the other way. Guthrie had that sensitive nature, that he often spoke with tears. But when he wept, the congregation wept too. I knew, long ago, a preacher who, having treated his nervous system with excessive alcohol, cried much more than Guthrie did. Only when he cried, the congregation laughed. Wherefore, oratorically, he was a failure.

It was a quiet life, and he was never anxious. He had worked hard, but 'never had taken either work or play nervously and

tensely.' Ah, how unlike some! The ancient *Anxius vixi* sums the story of many lives. 'Wine, tobacco, and late hours had never impaired his vigour.' His days went on amid honour and love. He was not conceited; but (as good Dean Ramsay said) pleased with his popularity. He never met severe criticism: the vulgar abuse of 'religious' papers does not count. So he glided gradually into old age: only pathetic lines now and then testifying that he did not quite like growing old. He resigned his Chair at the right time. It is literally true that his stay in Europe was a triumphal progress. Cambridge, Oxford, Edinburgh, hastened to do him honour. But we must be weaned from this life, both great and small. In the winter of '87-88 his wife died. Soon after, the devoted daughter left him. His sight failed much. But he had a bright young secretary, and if it be true that her name was Mary Wilkins, one who could write a pathetic little story far better than the Autocrat himself. His son, who had become (as he wrote to me with pride more than once) a Judge of the High Court, and his son's wife, were able to make his empty house a home to the close. He took his usual walks within a few days of the end. He was up and about the house to the last day. And finally, on October 7, 1894, he was released from worldly trouble. He had lived two months more than 85 years. Near four thousand publications took notice of his death and his career. But by far the most graceful words are in a poem which appeared in our own *Punch*: a poem indeed: briefly entitled 'THE AUTOCRAT.' Here is one verse which would have pleased him. No reader of O. W. H. needs to be told wherefore that measure.

Even gentle Elia's self  
Might be proud to share that shelf,  
Leaf to leaf,  
With a soul of kindred sort,  
Who could bind strong sense and sport,  
In one sheaf.

A. K. H. B.

## *The Lady of the Lock.*

RICHARD MYERS had just returned to his lodging, after a long day's work in the fields, and had taken off his boots, and 'washed him,' and otherwise prepared for the evening meal, which he shared with his landlady's family, when he caught sight of a small white packet lying on the window-sill just beneath the partly open sash. He went over to it, and examined it in the fast-fading light. When the wrapper was undone, he saw it contained something small and soft enfolded in tissue paper. On removing the inner covering Dick uttered a long low whistle. The little packet contained a curl of hair.

He struck a light and looked at it more closely, the tiny ring glittering in his hand like threads of gold. It was tied up with blue ribbon, and pinned to the small silken knot thus made was a narrow strip of printed paper, which, on closer investigation, appeared to be a motto that had probably once formed part of a cracker. Dick unpinned it, and smoothed it out, slowly spelling over its contents. These were the cabalistic words it bore :

I am young and I am bonny,  
I am tender, I am true;  
If you'll have me for your sweetheart,  
I'll have you.

Dick whistled again, and then laughed.

'Coom, this is rayther strong,' he remarked. He looked at the curl again; it seemed to be of a very pretty colour, a kind of red gold, each individual hair glittering in the light. He touched it—it was as soft as velvet; he turned it over and over in his hand.

'I cannot call to mind onybody as has hair of this colour,' he mused. 'It is bonny, too. I wonder who i' th' world con ha' sent it to me.'

He folded up the parcel again, and thrust it into his waistcoat



pocket, humming a little ditty to himself, his face alight with curiosity and pride.

When he entered the family living-room, he found his landlady, Mrs. Ann Jump, a hard-working washerwoman, seated at table with all her children round her. She looked up inquiringly as he entered.

'We was jest goin' to begin; yo're late to-day, Richard.'

'Did yo' notice onybody go past my window this artemnoon?' inquired Dick, seating himself and endeavouring to assume a casual air.

'Why, of course, I should think a good few folks went past yo'r window to-day, same as any other day,' responded Mrs. Jump, a trifle tartly.

'Yo' didn't notice onybody partic'lar, I suppose?' pursued Dick.

'Nay, I have other things to be thinkin' on nor to be standin' watchin' th' folks pass by. It is Saturday to-day, and I've been agate at my wark sin' afore dayleet. I only jest sat me down afore yo' coom in.'

'Did yo' ha' lady callers to-day, then?' insisted Dick, still determined to fathom the mystery of his mysterious present.

'Bless the lad! whatever is he moiderin' about? Lady callers of a Saturday! Likely, isn't it? If ony was to coom I'd soon run 'em out, I know that.'

Mr. Jump, who now entered the room, divesting himself of his coat as he did so, remarked, with a loud cheery laugh, that 'Dick thought very like as it were leap year soom of his lady friends had coom to ax him to put up the banns.' Dick responded with a laughing retort. He had forgotten about leap year, and the fact did indeed seem to throw some light upon the mystery. Though he would not own it, he thought in his own mind that it was extremely likely that one or other of the bonny lasses with whom he had 'walked' during the preceding year had considered it time to ascertain the nature of his intentions. Dick was a buck in his way, & handsome young fellow, who thought a good deal of himself and had on more than one occasion boasted that he had only to raise a finger and he 'could have any one o' th' village beauties for the axin';' some one had evidently wished to give him rather a broad hint. Dick owned to himself with a sigh that it would be well to concentrate his attentions upon one individual in particular. But who was the owner of the hair? Not Mary Latham—she was as black as a sloe; nor Kitty Norris,

her hair was lint white. Could it be Jenny Wharton?—He could not at that moment recall the colour of her locks, but he did not think they were of this beautiful ruddy gold. Jenny Wharton was a fine, dashing, good-tempered lass, with whom he had always found it pleasant to take a walk or to crack a joke—did Jenny really take his careless attentions seriously, and was she determined to bring him to the point?

‘Theer’s two opinions about everything,’ said Dick to himself. ‘I’m noan so sure now that I do fancy her. It is a pity if hoo’s coom to tak’ sich a likin’ for me.’

He went to bed in a perplexed condition of mind, and next morning woke with the dawn, and examined the little trophy by daylight. It *was* pretty hair; he had never seen any of that particular hue before. No, he did not think it could belong to Jenny. Then he read once more the motto:

I am young and I am bonny,  
I am tender, I am true;  
If you’ll have me for your sweetheart,  
I’ll have you.

‘A bit barefaced,’ he mused. “‘If you’ll have me for your sweetheart, I’ll have you.” But it is leap year, of course, and I reckon the lass thinks hoo’s doin’ no harm in taking advantage of it.’

He dressed with unusual care, plastering his locks well with highly scented pomatum, a luxury dear to the rustic soul, donning a tie of a brilliant hue, and altogether presenting a very fine appearance when he entered the kitchen.

Jump balanced his knife and fork on end and stared at him.

‘What is her name?’ he asked briefly. ‘See, yo’, missus, Dick’s goin’ coortin’! he is for sure. Which is it, Dick?’

‘I don’t know what yo’ mean,’ was the response, as Dick, very red in the face and yet with the smirk of the conscious conqueror, sat down to fortify his inner man by a large and sustaining meal.

At church that Sunday morning I fear me that his thoughts wandered frequently to the owner of the captivating curl, and his eyes roved up and down the benches, seeking to discover among the rows of smartly attired maidens the ‘fascinating she’ who claimed him as her own. But none of the sleek bent heads wore tresses of the colour he sought for. So, at least, it at first appeared; but towards the end of the sermon, in fact just as the rector had said ‘In conclusion,’ his eyes fell upon a little figure

seated at the farthest end of the bench immediately before him. The shadow of a pillar had until then fallen across her, but at this moment she suddenly stooped forward to pick up a detached leaf that had fluttered from her Prayer-book. Her bent head caught the light, and Dick started as he saw that the soft smooth coil of hair which was gathered up beneath her white straw hat gleamed with the familiar ruddy glow which haunted his thoughts. His eyes often rested on the little figure as the service proceeded. Its aspect was wholly unfamiliar to him, and when the girl turned her head he found to his surprise that he did not recognise the face. It was a very simple little face—round, and pink and white, and rather freckled, the nose slightly cocked, the eyes large and blue and babyish. When she knelt down Dick saw that the long curling lashes that veiled these eyes were only a shade or two darker in colour than the hair. Dick's thoughts were much preoccupied, and it is to be feared that his devotions were frequently interrupted by the vague wonder as to how this unknown lass should have heard of him, or why she had taken a fancy to him, for that *she* had sent him this love-token he never for an instant doubted. Hers were the only locks in the whole village whose colour matched the little curl shut up in Dick's trunk at home.

When the congregation left the church he loitered behind until the girl in question came out, and then boldly went up to her. Rustic etiquette, stringent enough on some points, is nevertheless comfortably lax in many particulars; any young man may speak to any young woman without needing to wait for an introduction.

'Yo're a stranger here, ar'n't yo'?' asked Richard, with his most engaging smile.

'I've nobbut jest coom,' she responded.

'Well, and what are yo' doin' here in the village?' pursued Dick.

'I've coom to be sarvant at Thorndons'.

'Oh, yo' han, han yo'? I heerd as their Maggie had left. Well, and what may yo'r name be?'

'Sarah Lupton,' was the reply, 'but they allus call me Sally.' The golden eyelashes were now shyly uplifted, and with a saucy smile she added, 'And what may yo'rs be, if I may ax?'

'Coom, yo' know mine well enough,' returned Dick, laughing; but Sally stared at him with unfeigned surprise. Could it be possible that, after all, she had fallen in love with him without so much as

knowing his name? 'Well, then, my name's Richard Myers, and they call me Dick,' he said. 'Yo' can call me Dick if yo'n a mind.'

'Tisn't likely as I shall want to call yo' onythin', returned Sally. 'I mun be off awhoam now, or th' missus 'ull be callin' out for me.'

'Dun yo' ever go for a walk Sunday arternoons?' inquired Dick.

'I do, when theer's onybody to walk wi'.'

'Yo' can walk wi' me, if yo' fancy it.'

Sally again raised those long, innocent-looking lashes, and surveyed Dick critically with her babyish blue eyes. Dick felt the colour mount in his face the while, but the result of Sally's investigation appeared to be satisfactory, for she nodded, and said succinctly:

'Two o'clock this day, then. I can have from two to six, missus says.'

'I will meet yo' at the Lone End,' said Dick, feeling a little queer as he turned away. He had often walked with lasses before, but never yet with one who had calmly announced her intention of being his sweetheart.

Punctually to the minute, however, he appeared at the appointed meeting-place, and soon descried Sally's small figure tripping down the lane to meet him. She really was a pretty little thing, and for a moment or two Dick lost all his previous self-consciousness as he considered her.

'A nice little body,' he thought to himself, 'and a notable little body. Hoo'd mak' a chap coomfortable enough, I dare say.'

Sally wore a print frock with sprigs of green all over it, and there were green ribbons in her hat and at her throat, and she had altogether a certain springlike freshness about her most comforting to the eye.

'Wheer shall we go?' inquired Dick.

'Jest as yo' fancy,' was the accommodating reply.

Dick paced along by her side for some minutes in silence, and then he said, 'We will go reet into the fields, wheer theer'll be nobry to bother us.'

They followed a narrow path beside a green new-budding hedge; the sky was blue overhead with little fleecy clouds which seemed to add to its brightness. Everything was green and bright and fresh and new, this spring morning. Dick, as he

walked along, felt his heart bound as it had never bounded when he was escorting Mary Latham or Jenny Wharton; and yet both Mary and Jane were, strictly speaking, far 'bonnier' than little golden-haired Sally.

Their conversation, however, touched only on the most ordinary topics. Sally was very discreet and very demure. When Dick offered her his arm, she decided that she could 'jest as well do wi'out,' and when he paid her one or two of the stereotyped compliments which in Jane's and Mary's case he had ever found effective, she desired him with a certain curt decision to 'give ower that nonsense.'

At last he resolved to come to an understanding with her; and pausing when they had reached a wood, already green, he proposed that they should rest a few minutes in the shade.

'The sun's not that hot,' protested Sally, but she consented nevertheless. They sat down on the short young grass, and presently Dick inquired, in a sentimental tone, where it was she had first seen him. Sally stared at him reflectively.

'I think it were last Friday week,' she replied, considering a little. 'Yes, Friday week it were. Yo'd been to market, and yo'r face were black.'

Dick's countenance changed.

'Black!' he ejaculated.

'Eh, yo'd been gettin' hold of a sack, or summat dirty, and yo'd smudged yo'r face; I mind I laughed.'

Dick was a little crestfallen, and a great deal astonished.

'And were that really the first time yo' saw me, Sally?'

She nodded.

'Then what made yo' think of me?'

The blue eyes were opened to the fullest extent.

'Think of yo'! Whoever said I thought of yo'?'

'Coom, yo' know yo' did,' said Dick, persuasively. He leaned forward, looking at her with a merry smile; his dark eyes twinkled, and his white teeth showed through his parted lips. Sally looked at him and smiled back.

'Well,' she said, after a moment, 'I wunnot say but what I have.'

'Reet,' said Dick, rubbing his hands, 'we're gettin' forrard now. Coom, yo' han' thought of me, I knowed it; theer's good cause why we should both know it, isn't theer?'

Sally simpered and looked down, and presently asked in a small, insinuating voice, 'And did yo' think of me, Dick?'

Dick hesitated for a moment. Never had he till that morning set eyes upon the girl, but he resolved to lie boldly like a man.

'I did,' he cried fervently. 'How can yo' doubt it, Sally?'

'And when did yo' first see me?' inquired Sally.

This was a puzzler. Dick cast about in his mind for a suitable occasion.

'I see yo' last churnin' day,' he remarked, gazing straight before him with a retrospective air. 'The last churnin' day which ever was, and yo' were walkin' across fro' th' shippon wi' yo'r pail or summat in yo'r hand, and the leet shone on yo'r hair, and I thought to mysel' as I had never seen sech bonny hair before.'

'Did yo'?' said Sally, much pleased. 'But,' as a sudden thought struck her, 'however did yo' see my hair, Dick? I allus weer my bonnet, yo' know, i' th' mornin', and it covers my head, face and all, till theer's nowt to be seen.'

Dick reflected for a moment.

'Ah, but the wind blew it off a minute—dunnot yo' mind the wind blew it off?'

'I dunnot remember,' said Sally, with a puzzled look. But Dick clinched the matter by remarking that if the wind had not blown off her bonnet, he could not have noticed her hair, a fact which was obviously conclusive.

'It is bonny hair, Sally,' pursued Dick, with a meaning air. Sally blushed. 'Ay, it's bonny hair,' repeated Dick. 'A mon 'ud be very pleased to get a bit of thot hair, Sally.'

'Like yo'r impudence,' remarked Sally, with a toss of her head. Dick felt a little irritated. Why could not she own at once that she had been tempted into an indiscretion which he of all men could but regard leniently?

'Dun yo' often gi' folks locks of hair?'

'Never,' responded Sally, with decision.

'Coom, once in a way yo' do, dunnot yo'?' Sally shook her head.

'I know a mon,' said Dick, staring at her fixedly, 'as has got a bit, a lovely bit, and keeps it locked up, and kisses it often.'

Sally's face flamed.

'Yo' know nowt of the kind,' she responded, with great asperity. 'I'll noan set here any more if yo' tell sech lees.'

Dick whistled.

'Sally,' he said, 'we's ha' no more of this. I've got thot lock

of yo'r hair as yo' sent me, and I'm goin' to keep it, and I *will* have yo' for my sweetheart, as yo' axed me.'

Sally sprang to her feet, and to Dick's immense surprise answered this declaration by bestowing a sounding box on his ear.

'I'm noan thot mak' o' wench,' she cried, energetically. 'I never give onybody a lock of hair in my life; and as for axin' yo' to be my sweetheart, I would not do sech a thing if theer was never another mon i' th' world.'

Dick rose to his feet, astonished and irate.

'Didn't yo' send me thot parcel last neet, then?' he asked. 'I know it's yo'r hair, and *yo'* mun know what was wrote inside.'

'What was it?' cried Sally, wrathfully, but impressed, in spite of herself, by his manner.

'I am young and I am bonny,  
I am tender, I am true;  
If you'll have me for your sweetheart,  
I'll have you.'

repeated Dick, with great unction and precision. 'Theer, thot's plain enough, isn't it? and the hair was jest the same as yo'rs—beautiful hair, like gold, and soft as down. I will swear it is yo'rs. There is not another lass as ever I see as has hair the same as thot.'

Sally sat staring at him, with round dilated eyes, the colour mantling in her cheeks, an irrepressible simper hovering about her mouth.

'Well, I really didn't send it,' she said, in tones which did not admit of doubt. 'I truly didn't. Soombry mun ha' played us a trick. Why, I never could ha' been so bowd as to send yo' sech a message as thot.'

'Why not?' said Dick, gallantly. 'It is true enough. Yo're young, yo' know, and bonny, and I am sure yo'll be tender and true. Well, then, why could not us be sweethearts?'

'Eh, Dick, we dunnot know each other, and I dunnot like the notion o' yo' thinkin' it was me as axed yo'.'

'Well, it is leap year, yo' know, and a lass can do it in leap year wi'out onybody thinkin' shame o't. And truly, Sally, I'd like yo' to be my sweetheart.'

'Well,' said Sally, and sighed, and stole a glance at Dick. He assumed his most persuasive air. He was really a good-looking young fellow, and she could not but own the fact to herself.



'Well, I dunnot mind keeping coompany wi' yo' to see how we get on,' she said, hesitatingly, after a moment's pause, 'but I cannot think whoever sent yo' thot hair.'

'It is the most beautiful hair that ever I see,' persisted Dick. 'It is thot hair as made me first think of yo', Sally.' Sally walked on a few steps, smiling to herself, and Dick hastened after her, for a time forgetting his usual self-conceit, and, indeed, almost oblivious of his own personality in his growing admiration and love. Sally was a dainty little lass, quick and precise in her ways. As she walked in front of him he noted how light was her step, how graceful her movements; the very turn of her little round throat had a charm for him, and the curling tendrils of that wonderful hair fascinated his eye.

The path led them presently to the high wall which surrounded the Squire's park. The very stones seemed to glitter in the bright sunlight, and the shadows of the curled baby leaves which hung over from the plantation within danced and flickered on its surface. Sally tilted back her head and looked up at the shifting green tracery. 'Eh, I wish we were o' the t'other side o' yon wall,' she cried. 'I've never been theer, and they say it's beautiful at this time o' the year. Th' daffodils is out, and birds' nests i' th' trees; they say it's like fairyland.'

'Coom, we's soon get ower, if thot's all,' replied Dick. 'I'll help yo', and if we meet onybody we'll say we're nobbut goin' on a message to th' keeper; he lives yon, yo' know, i' th' little white cottage over theer.'

Sally after some demur consented to climb the wall, on the condition that Dick got over first. The young man complied, and Sally soon scrambled up, pausing on the top of the wall to look down at him with her head on one side like a startled bird.

'I can never get down,' she cried. 'I shall fall, I know I shall fall!'

The usual lovers' comedy was then enacted, Sally finally jumping with a laugh and a scream, and being duly caught in Dick's arms.

There did, indeed, seem to be a little bit of fairyland behind that wall. Lines of daffodils grew on either side of the path, stretching away in a long perspective of green and gold as far as the eye could reach; the gnarled trunks of the trees stood out boldly amid the more delicate undergrowth of budding ash and crimson-tipped sycamore saplings; the great bushes of rhododendrons, the green shining leaves of which glanced bravely in the

sunlight, were sown with clusters of lilac and crimson and white; the white stems of birch and beech flashed out here and there like silver: there was sunlight everywhere, everything seemed to glitter and sparkle and flash. The couple wandered on a little way, the sense that they were trespassing adding a certain zest to their enjoyment. Sally picked a bunch of daffodils and fastened some in her waistband, bestowing, after some coquetting, a posy on Dick, to wear in his button-hole. They sat down on a mossy bank and entertained each other for some time after the fashion of lovers of their class, Dick much amusing Sally by drawing sundry designs on the soft mould of the path in front of them with the point of his stick. Sally duly watched and applauded when he drew two large lopsided hearts with their initials in the centre of each.

‘Now,’ he said, ‘we’ll make it complete.’

He slowly and carefully scratched beneath the affecting picture the lines which had been ringing in his head since the preceding day.

They were just contemplating this work of art with heads bent sideways, when a quick light step just behind them made them start, and a tall girl suddenly pushed aside the elder boughs and jumped down into the path. It was Jane Wharton, the keeper’s daughter. Dick looked up in some confusion, and edged a little farther away from Sally: he felt bashful at this sudden encounter, for, as it has been already said, Jane and he had had some little amorous passages together in former days. Jane, however, looked from one to the other and burst into a merry laugh.

‘Well, Richard,’ she cried, ‘I reckon yo’re caught at last! Wonderful lovin’ yo’ looked just now, and what’s this yo’n drawn out so beautiful? Two ‘earts and a bit of poetry. Let’s see.

‘I am young and I am bonny,  
I am tender, I am true;  
If you’ll have me for your sweetheart,  
I’ll have you.

Where did you get that from? Seems as if I’d heerd it before.’ The couple looked up quickly, their eyes, by common accord, fastening themselves on the thick plaits of hair which were wound round Jane’s head. Both heaved a simultaneous sigh of relief. Jane’s tresses were of an indescribable colour, neither brown nor fair, but certainly with no tinge either of red or gold.

Jane laughed again. ‘I know what yo’r thinkin’ on,’ she cried. ‘I’m in the secret too.’

Sally looked up quickly and wrathfully, but said nothing. Dick rubbed his hands and laughed in a puzzled way :

‘Happen yo’ sent it?’ he cried.

Jane chuckled. ‘Well, if yo’re talkin’ about a little parcel as was left at yo’r place last neet I don’t mind sayin’ I took it theer.’

Dick began to feel rather annoyed.

‘Well,’ he said, ‘I’d like to know what business yo’ had puttin’ locks of hair inside my window.’

‘Weren’t it pretty hair, though?’ said Jane, and laughed again.

‘It were thot,’ agreed Myers. ‘I never seed hair o’ thot colour before, nobbut Sally’s here.’

A light suddenly seemed to dawn upon Jane. ‘Did yo’ think Sally sent it?’ she cried, and fell to clapping her hands and fairly dancing with glee. ‘Eh, dear, I never thought it ‘ud coom to thot.’ Then suddenly composing herself she addressed the other girl, who had now risen to her feet, crimson with anger.

‘Yo’ look quiet enough,’ she pursued; ‘think o’ yo’ sendin’ locks o’ hair to folks as yo’n scarce set eyes on!’

‘Yo’ know very well I didn’t send it,’ protested poor Sally, on the point of tears; ‘yo’ know it is not my hair.’

‘Isn’t it jest the same colour?’ giggled Jane. ‘Now, yo’ know very well, Sally, there isn’t another girl i’ th’ place as has hair like thot—at least,’ correcting herself, ‘not as yo’ know of. But theer, dunnot be in sich a stew; it isn’t yo’r hair—I may as well own it, it belongs to a friend of mine.’

Dick rose too, much excited and astonished. ‘And did yo’ send it me?’ he inquired. ‘Fancy thot! Is it onybody I know?’

‘Yo’ may ha’ seen her, but I doubt if yo’ noticed her,’ responded Jane, still convulsed with merriment, ‘but hoo noticed yo’ as how ’tis. Hoo peeped at yo’ once fro’ behind one o’ these trees, and hoo even followed yo’ a little way, and when yo’ didn’t turn yo’r head, hoo sot her down i’ the path and cried.’

‘Cried!’ echoed Dick, with an astonished smirk. ‘Cried! How ever did hoo coom to think so mich o’ me as thot?’

‘All the lasses here, yo’ know, think a deal o’ yo’, Dick,’ cried Jane, suddenly becoming serious, and wagging her head solemnly. ‘Yo’re not the only one, Sally, yo’ needn’t think it. Why, Dick here says hissel’ that theer isn’t a lass i’ th’ place as he couldn’t have for the axing.’

Sally tossed her head. ‘I’m sure he’s welcome to ’em all for me,’ she said.

'Dunnot yo' say as this here lady as sent me her hair is a friend o' yo'rs?' asked Dick, still pleasantly agitated. 'I cannot think how ever it is I didn't notice her. Wheer does hoo live and what's her name?'

'Her name's Rose.'

'Rose what?'

'Ah, thot 'ud be tellin'! Yo'd happen like to see her?'

'Well,' said Dick, breaking off with a furtive glance at Sally, who began to walk away with her nose in the air; but Jane's next words arrested her.

'Hoo's at our place now; I'll fetch her if yo' like.'

'If Sally hasn't no objections,' said Dick, hesitatingly. 'It makes a mon feel a bit queer, yo' know, to hear these things. I don't want to ha' nowt to say to her—me an' Sally is keeping coompany now—but I'd jest like to see her.'

'Hoo's bonny,' said Jane. 'Her e'en are bigger nor Sally's, and brown, and her hair is softer nor Sally's, I tell yo'. But I'll fetch her, and yo'll see for yo'rsel's.'

'Wait, Jane, wait,' cried Dick, feeling suddenly a little alarmed. 'It'll be a bit awkward if hoo fancies me so much as thot cooms to.'

'I'm sure I don't want to see her,' cried Sally, walking away, but very slowly. She was angry with Dick, furious with Jane; nevertheless, her curiosity was too great to be withstood.

Jane began to walk backward in the direction of her home, still giggling to herself in a particularly exasperating manner.

'Yo' needn't be frettened, Richard; hoo'll not say nowt, I'll promise yo'. Bide a bit, Sally, wunnot yo'? Yo'd like to see this beauty. Ha, ha! shut yo'r e'en, both of yo', and I'll fetch her in a minute.'

She whisked round and ran off rapidly. Sally stood still with her back to Dick, observing after a moment, in a choked voice, 'I'm sure I don't know what I'm stopping for. It's nowt to me how bonny this lady o' yo'rs is, Mester Myers.'

'Hoo isn't my lady as I know on,' returned Dick, much exhilarated by Sally's evident pique. 'I've nowt to do wi' her. Yo' needn't be so takken to, Sally. It's noan o' my fault if hoo will tak' a likin' for me.'

Sally tried to say something very biting, but the words would not come, only a humiliating little sob which she ineffectually tried to disguise with a cough.

In a few minutes rapid steps were heard pattering over the soft ground, and Jane's voice called out :

'Now, then, keep yo'r e'en shut, I tell yo'! This way, my beauty. Now!'

Dick and Sally opened their eyes and craned forward their necks eagerly. There stood Jane in the middle of the path, no other figure appeared by her side, but in her arms she held a very fat setter puppy.

'Here's yo'r lady!' cried Jane, shrieking with laughter. 'Here's the beauty! Look at her hair—did yo' ever see sich bonny golden hair? And look at her e'en—they're bigger nor yo'rs, aren't they, Sally? and sich a lovely brown! Coom and talk to her.'

There was, however, complete silence for a moment or two, after which, I regret to say, Dick began to swear, and Sally to cry.

'To think,' she sobbed, 'as yo' could ever fancy thot nasty dirty dog's hair was mine! I'll never speak to yo' again!'

Dick's reply need not be recorded. Jane dandled the puppy up and down, and waved its paws, and laughed till the tears ran down her cheeks.

'Ah, ha! Mester Dick,' she cried, composing herself at last, 'wasn't thot a trick? Yo' never guessed, did yo'? See what it is to be too mich set up! Ever sin' I heerd yo' say as all th' lasses o' th' place were fair silly about yo' I've been longin' to mak' yo' feel a bit silly yo'rsel'! Yo' thought yo'd nowt to do nobbut howd out yo'r finger to ony lass, didn't yo'? Well, theer's poor little Sally as was ready enough, but we're not all o' the same mak'. Coom, han yo' nowt to say? This here beauty is to be had for th' axin'. Hoo isn't so well shapped as th' others, and my feyther says he'll give her to onyone as 'll tak' her. It were thot as first put th' notion into my head. I says to mysel', "I'll have a bit of a marlock wi' yon conceited chap Dick." What! hannot yo' a word for her? Coom, then, Rose, we's say ta-ta!'

She once more waved the dog's paw and ran off. When she was out of sight, Dick ventured to draw near to Sally, who stood, still sobbing, with her face buried in her hands. She pushed him angrily away, however.

'Be off! I want noan o' yo'; yo' hannot a word to say. I'd be ashamed to look onybody i' th' face if I were yo', lettin' Jane mak' a fool of us both, thot gate! Why couldn't yo' say summat, and not let her have it all her own way? But the truth is yo' hadn't nowt to say.'

'I had, though,' retorted Dick, 'but I weren't agoin' to say it while Jane were theer. I could ha' made her look a bit silly if I'd a mind.'

'Why didn't yo', then?' cried Sally, turning her little, flushed, tear-stained face towards him. 'Eh, I'd ha' been fain to see thot, but I dunnot believe yo' could.'

'I could,' said Dick stoutly. 'The fact is, Jane played this trick out of spite because I wouldn't ha' nowt to say to her. Jane was awful gone on me.'

'I dunnot believe it,' said Sally, vaguely comforted nevertheless.

'But I wouldn't have her at no price,' went on Dick, loftily waving his hand.

'I dunnot believe it,' said Sally again, this time more pettishly. 'Jane says hersel' as yo're allus makkin' out as every lass i' th' place wants yo'.'

'So they do,' said Dick, with conviction; 'they all do, Sally, but theer's nobbut one lass as *I* want, and yo' know her name.'

Sally lifted her long eyelashes, on which the big tears were still hanging, and looked at him piteously.

'But how could yo' ever think my hair was like a nasty dog's?' she said plaintively.

'It were a pretty little pup, though,' said Dick deprecatingly.

Sally pouted. 'Jane said hoo weren't sich a good shapped one as the others,' she murmured.

'Hoo mayn't be thot, but hoo's a beauty as how 'tis. Wonderful valuable breed, thot theer is—I heerd as Squire gave pounds an' pounds fur the dog as he has yonder.'

Sally was impressed for a moment, but presently resumed, still in an injured tone: 'This one weren't worth so mich, then; Jane said her feyther 'ud gi' it to onybody as 'ud be willin' to tak' it.'

'Hoo was to be had fur the axin', in fact,' said Dick, with a twinkle in his eye.

Sally whisked round, and stamped her little foot. 'Go away, do,' she cried. 'I hate the very seet on yo'. All lasses is not o' the same mak', as Jane said. *I'm* not to be had fur the axin'.'

Dick gazed at her, still with that funny little twinkle in his eye.

'Naw, Sally, it's true, yo're not; I haven't axed yo' yet, as I know on.'

'Yo' haven't!' ejaculated the girl. 'Of all the impident,

barefaced — Well! I'd be ashamed to tell sich lees, if I was yo'. How is it that we're keepin' coompany, then, if yo' didn't ax me?'

'Oh, well,' said Dick, 'I thought yo' axed me first. Theer, dunnot be so mad,' as Sally began some indignant protest. 'I say I *thought* yo' did; but it were a mistake, yo' know, quite a mistake, an' I'm goin' to make it all square now, I truly am; I'm goin' to ax yo' gradely.'

He flung himself on his knees, and clasped his hands. 'Will you be my little wife, Sally dear?'

Sally drew herself up and cast a look of unutterable scorn upon her smiling lover.

'I'll noan stay here to be made a fool of,' she said, with a quivering lip, and would have rushed away but that Dick caught her by the skirt.

'Nay, Sally, 'earken a minute. "I am young," that's me; "I am bonny," that's you; "I am tender," that's you too; "I am true," that's both of us.'

'I'm sure it isn't yo',' cried Sally, tugging viciously at her skirt; but Dick held it fast.

'Nay, wait a bit, Sally. "If yo'll have me for your sweetheart" — that's me axin' yo', yo' know—"I'll have yo'." Now, that's what yo're goin' to say to me, like a dear little lass. Coom, yo'll say it, Sally, an' make me 'appy?'

Sally, with a mighty wrench, released her skirt, and then inconsequently stood still.

'Yo're an unkind, cruel chap,' she cried, 'to go laughin' at me, an' makkin' a fool o' me. Why couldn't yo' let me alone? I never did nowt to you! An' now yo'n bin teasin' me an' tormentin' me, an' upsettin' me till I feel as if I couldn't welly look onybody i' th' face again!'

Dick sprang to his feet, and his whole manner changed.

'Eh, poor little lass! it was a shame, it was thot. Eh! I'd like to pay Jane out fur playin' us sich a trick. Theer, dunnot yo' cry, my lass; I deserve that soombry should crack my stupid head. I met ha' knowed as yo' were noan the kind o' lass as 'ud do aught as wasn't seemly. Give ower cryin', do, Sally; it's true what I say, yo're the only one as ever I wanted. I may ha' joked a bit before, but I'm in earnest now. Do say as yo'll have me, I'll love you true, I will; theer's nowt as I wunnot do for yo'.'

But Sally's feelings were ruffled, and though Dick's penitence was sincere, it was some time before she would allow herself to be



mollified. This happy result was, however, finally brought about by Dick's suggesting that his humiliation was greater than hers, since she ruthlessly declined the hand and heart which he had never before offered to any woman.

'If Jane were to know, I wonder what hoo'd say,' he added artfully.

Sally found the idea soothing; a faint dimple appeared at the corner of her mouth.

Dick heaved a deep sigh.

'Yo' con tell her if yo' like,' he said, valiantly; 'it's all the same to me now what happens. I care nought fur nothin' as onybody can say. I'm brought low enough, an' onybody as chooses con walk o'er me—Jane'll be 'appy enough—it's just what hoo wants, to be able to laugh at me.'

Sally looked pensive. Dick pursued, without looking at her:

'It's what hoo's bin workin' fur all along—hoo cannot thooal the notion of onybody havin' me nobbut hersel'. Hoo'll think hersel' wonderful clever.'

'I dunnot see thot,' said Sally, petulantly; 'it's no business of Jane's.'

'Hoo thinks it is, then,' said Dick. 'Eh! Hoo'll be fain, I tell yo'. I know what 'ud really vex her—it 'ud be to see us two 'appy together, keepin' coompany jest same as if hoo hadn't played off her mischeevous trick at all. My word, hoo'd laugh the wrong side of her mouth then.'

'Dun yo' think so?' said the girl, considering a moment. 'Well, then, arter all, yo' an' me has no need to trouble we're minds about Jane. We'll soon show her,' she added, inconsequently, 'as we care nought fur the worst hoo can do.'

Dick's arm stole round her waist.

'When yo' coom to think on it,' he said, insinuatingly, 'the laugh's all on our side. Ha, ha! of coorse it is.'

'Of coorse,' agreed Sally, smiling too. 'Jane will be mad to see us as friendly as ever, wunnot hoo?'

'Hoo wunnot know what to do wi' hersel',' said Dick emphatically. 'Coom, Sally, we'n got the best o' th' joke!'

And indeed, as the young lovers wandered on, arm in arm, in the sunlight, any unbiassed observer would have agreed with them.

M. E. FRANCIS.

## *Atmospheric Pressure.*

**D**URING the past couple of years the general public, as well as the strictly scientific members of the community, have been greatly interested in the success which has attended the attempts made by Professor Dewar, at the Royal Institution, to liquefy and solidify atmospheric air. The difficult and costly operation is one which has engaged the closest attention of physicists for generations, and numerous have been the experiments in our own country and abroad to bring the question stage by stage nearer and nearer the hoped-for solution. However, the nineteenth century was nearing its close before it was rendered possible for the unaided human eye to look upon the air we breathe in the form of a tangible body—something much more substantial than ‘the airy nothing’ in which we are enveloped—something which is as obvious to our senses of sight and feeling as a lump of coal, and can just as easily be weighed on an ordinary balance. Of course we all know, or ought to know, that in spite of its invisibility and great tenuity, and of our own unconsciousness of continuously bearing upon our bodies many tons of it, the atmosphere, as it exists freely in Nature, is a ponderable gas. Two and a half centuries before Professor Dewar presented us with blocks of solid air, means had been devised for weighing it in its normal, free state, and there are now few parts of the world, at sea as well as on land, where the operation of weighing the air is not performed regularly and systematically every day.

To the earlier philosophers the investigations connected with our atmosphere presented insuperable difficulties, for the all-sufficient reason that they had not the advantages we possess in the matter of delicately constructed instruments to aid them in their researches. All they could do was to make what to us now may seem the wildest of wild guesses as to the nature and properties of the subtle medium surrounding our globe. We pass down the

long vista of ages to find that in olden days the most learned men in each successive generation groped about in the darkness; the desire then, as it is now, and as it will continue to be till the end of time, being to 'rifle Nature even to her very nudities.' They did their best, each in his own way, to offer more or less feasible explanations of the phenomena which they and others witnessed; but practically nothing more than theorising was accomplished until the middle of the seventeenth century.

Like so many other important scientific discoveries, that of the unearthing of the fact that the atmosphere has weight may be regarded as brought about by accidental and very simple circumstances. The immortal Galileo was ignorant of the physics of the atmosphere until quite the closing years of his eventful life. Workmen in the employ of the Duke of Tuscany, having occasion to pump water to a considerable height, found to their great surprise that, do what they would, and work as hard as they could, the water simply refused to ascend in the pipe to a greater height than about 32 feet. Ascertaining that the pump was free from all faults of construction, they, in their perplexity, decided to appeal to the famous philosopher Galileo to learn what could possibly be the explanation of such an extraordinary fact. His answer was a measure of his knowledge of the subject at that time. He assured his questioners that the water rose to a height of 32 feet and no higher because Nature abhorred a vacuum, but that this horror was limited and did not operate above 32 feet! Before his death, in 1642, he seems, however, to have thought over this curious problem a good deal, and to have arrived at the conclusion that the atmosphere has weight, and that it must play some important part in the operation. No doubt he communicated his views on the subject to his favourite disciple, Evangelista Torricelli, who is found soon after the master's death to be trying to discover how to obtain the weight of the air. Towards the end of the year 1643 he mentioned to his colleague Viviani that he was conducting some experiments with quicksilver—*esperienza dell' argento vivo*—and in the following year, in two letters written at Florence, on June 11 and 28, 1644, he informed his friend Ricci, at Rome, of the success which had attended his investigation, diagrams being given to show the construction of the instrument.

From these communications it is evident that Torricelli had devoted much thought to the solution of the difficulty. Finally he had taken a glass tube, about a yard long, hermetically closed

at one end, open at the other, and filling it with mercury, plunged the open end into a bowl of the same liquid. It was then seen that the mercury in the tube was sinking gradually, and it continued to do so until the top of the column was at about 30 inches above the level of the contents of the bowl, when the descent stopped, and the mercury was apparently at rest. There was, therefore, a space between the mercury and the sealed end of the tube which contained nothing, not even air. Torricelli's first idea seems to have been that the instrument was a means of obtaining just what Nature was supposed to abhor—a vacuum—and the empty space thus obtained has ever since been known as the Torricellian vacuum. But another point immediately presented itself to him as requiring some explanation. Here was the best part of a yard of a heavy fluid suspended in mid-air without any visible support—there was no deception, no sleight of hand to confuse him and to draw his attention from the main fact. What could it all mean? Watching the column carefully, he found that, although to the casual observer it was perfectly still, it was in reality perpetually on the move, rising and falling, but at an exceedingly slow rate, the ascent or descent varying in rapidity from time to time. After meditating on this interesting feature for some time, he rightly conjectured that it was to be explained by changes in the air, which he supposed to be sometimes heavy and dense, at other times light and rarefied. He also reasoned from it that our globe is enveloped in an ocean of air exerting a certain amount of pressure, being heaviest in the lowest strata, at the earth's surface, where he computed it to be 400 times lighter than water. (It is about 800 times lighter.) We are also left in no doubt that he had detected another element of disturbance influencing the length of the mercurial column, for he noticed that it was affected by changes of temperature as well as changes of weight, so that, as a matter of fact, he determined the fundamental principles upon which the construction of this invaluable instrument depends.

To say that the news regarding this grand discovery spread like wildfire would be an exaggeration. Nowadays the philosopher has but to casually mention that he has advanced some particular subject by a single step, and next morning practically the whole civilised world, from China to Peru, sits down to breakfast provided with a more or less complete account of the new topic in the daily newspapers. Two and a half centuries ago, however, the world was content to jog along at an infinitely slower

pace than this. A description of Torricelli's strange device does not appear to have reached Pascal, at Rouen, until the year 1646. The young Frenchman immediately set himself to study the whole question, and he was soon in a position to carry out a series of experiments in the presence of a number of *savants* who were firm believers in the idea of Nature's horror of a vacuum. Producing two long tubes, each closed at one end, he filled one with water, the other with wine. Inverting them and immersing the lower ends in water and in wine respectively, the assembled critics beheld the water sink until the top of the column came to about 32 feet from the level of the water in the vessel below, while the column of wine, being the lighter fluid, ceased falling at a point about two feet higher than the water. The experiments clearly established, in Pascal's opinion, the truth that the air alone maintained the columns of various liquids in suspension; that 30 inches of mercury, 32 feet of water, 34 feet of wine, and so on, were of equal weight, each being exactly balanced by the superincumbent atmosphere.

But those were not the days when scientific truths could be accepted without something more than a mild protest. Religious people were shocked at the manner in which philosophers trifled with the profound secrets of Nature. The leading Church authorities saw, or pretended to see, in that innocent but excellent instrument principles subversive of religion, and they condemned the Torricellian vacuum as altogether repugnant to Nature. At least to his own satisfaction, Linus proved that the space was not a vacuum, attributing the suspension of the mercury to an invisible film or thread of mercury depending from the dome of the tube, which, although so infinitely fine, was strong enough to support the whole 30 inches below. Kircher also joined in the fray, advancing other and equally absurd reasons for dismissing with contempt the theories in support of the vacuum, which he considered to be prejudicial to the orthodox faith. For a time, therefore, it was difficult to get any one to believe in the success of the new instrument.

Pascal's experiments aroused intense hostility amongst the French clergy, and 'all the prejudices of a bad philosophy and all the virulence of error were summoned to the attack' by Father Noel, who wrote a scathing denunciation of the entire business. To Pascal, however, the whole thing was so genuine that the more his work was condemned the more determined was he to discover some more convincing proofs. He argued that if the air really

supported the mercury, then, as there must be less air at the top of a mountain than at the base, the column would sink in the tube much lower at the summit than on the lowland at the foot. The idea was put to the test as soon as he could induce his brother-in-law, Perier, to assist him. On September 19, 1648, Perier, provided with a tube of mercury, made the ascent of the Puy-de-Dôme, over 3,000 feet above Clermont. By the time the summit was reached the quicksilver had gradually dropped until it was more than 3 inches lower than at starting, but on descending again to Clermont it regained its original level. This interesting experiment was several times repeated by ascending and descending the mountain on different sides, the results being always the same. After this proof, so entirely in favour of his views, Pascal was content to give practical demonstrations of the truth of his theory by experiments on a much smaller scale, a church steeple being utilised to show that the mercurial column sank or rose in the tube according as it was carried up from or down towards the earth. By these simple means his opponents were completely silenced, for it became obvious to the meanest intellect amongst them that the far-fetched ideas they had advanced as explanations of why the mercury remained suspended were untenable against the doctrines propounded by Pascal.

Apparently the first instrument of the kind known in Germany was at Regensburg, in 1654; and four or five years later some of the members of the scientific club then in course of formation, and subsequently known as 'the Royal Society of London for the Improving of Natural Knowledge,' were delighted to become possessed of one. It was one of the founders of the Royal Society, the Honourable Robert Boyle, who, on carefully studying the new instrument, gave it the name *barometer* (from the Greek *baros*, weight, and *metron*, measure), because it measured the weight of the superincumbent atmosphere.

It did not take long for those who watched the behaviour of the instrument closely to discover that, even when it was kept in a fixed position, the mercurial column was practically never at rest, rising and falling just as in the experiments on the slopes of the Puy-de-Dôme, but not to the same extent. The weight of the atmosphere at any one spot was therefore taken to be a very variable quantity, and after a little experience observers came to connect these irregular fluctuations of the mercury with the changes which were taking place almost simultaneously in the weather. Speaking generally, the decline of the column was marked by



damp southerly breezes, and its elevation by dry northerly breezes. This discovery soon led to the barometer being popularly recognised, not as 'the air-weigher' but as 'the weather-glass,' or simply 'the glass.' However, the relationship which exists between atmospheric pressure and our daily weather changes will not be dealt with in this article. Quite apart from the purely meteorological aspect, there are many other very interesting features connected with the subject which are not by any means familiar to the public at large.

First of all, let us get some idea as to the weight of the atmosphere. From what has already been said as to the origin of the barometer, there should be no difficulty in understanding that the principle underlying the construction of the instrument is that the free and unfettered air balances a column of mercury varying in height according to the circumstances of the moment, but whose average elevation at the level of the sea is 30 inches. But we know, because we can ascertain directly, that 30 cubic inches of mercury weigh close upon 15 pounds avoirdupois, and therefore we say that, under normal conditions, the pressure of the atmosphere is 15 pounds on every square inch, an amount which does not at first sight strike the casual reader as deserving of much consideration. If, however, instead of taking such a tiny space as a square inch for our base, we adopt some larger area, even the dullest intellect is immediately struck by the importance of the point, for the facts at once begin to assume gigantic proportions. Thus, on a square foot the weight of the air is little short of a ton; on a square yard it exceeds  $8\frac{1}{2}$  tons; and on a square of  $10\frac{1}{2}$ -feet side it is 100 tons. Extend the calculation to an acre, and to a ten-acre field, to the area of your own parish, town, or county, and then see how bewildering the results are. What is known as Inner London, an area of 122 square miles, supports an aerial pressure of 3,250,000,000 tons, or considerably over 600 tons to each inhabitant. The metropolis, however, is only the thousandth part of the area of the United Kingdom, the superincumbent atmosphere over the entire country weighing the mere bagatelle of 3,200,000,000,000 tons. To arrive at some approximate conception of the immensity of such a weight, we will assume the air over our islands to be converted into coal in the bowels of the earth. Our coalfields now yield about 180,000,000 tons of coal annually and give employment to 600,000 workmen. To bring to the surface the whole of the



air which we have supposed turned into coal would occupy this vast army of miners a matter of 18,000 years!

But the British Isles, again, form only a very small fraction of the surface of the globe, the aggregate weight of the atmospheric envelope surrounding the world being about 5,000 billions of tons, which has been represented as the weight of a solid leaden ball having a diameter of 60 miles. Such figures are really beyond the human comprehension; we become confused and bewildered in contemplating them. Their magnitude will be vaguely comprehended from the following significant figures. Our atmosphere is composed almost exclusively of nitrogen and oxygen—76·9 per cent. of the former to 23·1 of the latter, with 'very minute' proportions of carbonic acid, water vapour, and argon. Now the scarcely measurable quantity of aqueous vapour floating in the air has, for the whole world, a gross weight of about 55,000,000,000 tons, a prodigious quantity, which we refer to as only part of a 'very minute' fraction of the entire atmosphere.

Thus far we have looked upon the air as being equally distributed all round the world, balancing 30 inches of mercury at every spot on the earth's surface. We must now go a step further, and consider the atmosphere as it is in its natural state. It is well known to every reader of the daily papers who takes the smallest interest in the weather reports that the barometer is perpetually in motion, at one time rising, at another falling; rising in one locality, falling in another; and that the aerial envelope is consequently never uniform in weight over any considerable portion of the earth. If we take a map, say of Europe, and place on it in proper position the barometric readings, reduced to sea-level, at a large number of well-distributed stations, and at a set hour on any day, we shall find that the values group themselves into more or less well-defined areas—perhaps over Russia all would be high, and those over the British Isles an inch or two lower; or it may be the other way about; or the highest readings may be grouped over Central Europe, and very low ones be found in the extreme west and extreme east; or low readings over the central countries may be flanked on either side by much higher values. Changes are continually in progress, and there is an endless variety of combinations, so that no two successive days present identically the same picture. Although people are familiar enough with the names 'cyclone' and 'anticyclone,' few can explain their precise signification. Here it will be sufficient to state merely

that cyclonic areas are areas of low barometric pressure, and anti-cyclones areas of high pressure.

As the weight of the air when the mercury stands at a height of 30 inches is 15 pounds per square inch, it will be evident that a cubic inch of mercury weighs half a pound; so that if the barometric column rises or falls 1 inch we know that the weight of the atmosphere increases or decreases by half a pound. Now, the absolutely highest and lowest barometer readings, corrected and reduced to sea-level, which are on record, have occurred in Asia. On January 14, 1893, the register at Irkutsk, in Siberia, touched 31·792 inches, while at False Point, on the coast of Orissa, on September 22, 1885, the reading was 27·124 inches. These extremes are nearly  $4\frac{3}{4}$  inches apart, and represent a possible change of atmospheric weight of more than  $2\frac{1}{4}$  pounds on the square inch. Within the British Isles the extreme values thus far have been 31·09 inches at Ardrossan on January 9, 1896, and 27·24 inches at Omagh, Tyrone, on December 8, 1886, showing a range of 3·85 inches, equal to nearly 2 pounds per square inch.

When applied to extensive regions, these figures really indicate tremendous weights moved about the earth's surface. As an illustration of the important shifting of weights which is ceaselessly in progress, we will compare the anticyclone of January 9, 1896, with the cyclone of December 8, 1886. In the former the average of the barometer readings over the whole of the United Kingdom was 30·96 inches, and in the latter 28·05 inches, a difference of 2·91 inches. Now if we covered the land area with a layer of mercury 2·91 inches in thickness, such a coating would weigh 308,000,000,000 tons. Barometric fluctuations of an inch in extent are comparatively frequent in this country, and an inch of mercury means 108,000,000,000 tons of air more or less, as the case may be, over the kingdom.

There are good reasons for believing that the earth—'this too, too solid earth' as many of us suppose it to be—feels these enormous changes of weight, and responds to them much in the same way as an orange would respond to the pressure and the withdrawal of a finger. It must be remembered that the surface of the globe is dotted all over with moving cyclones and anti-cyclones differing in weight to the extent of many hundreds of thousands of millions of tons, so that the idea that the earth's outer crust is about as unstable as a jelly is not so absurd as it might appear at first sight. Professor G. H. Darwin, after some careful experiments conducted at Cambridge, has calculated that

even if the earth were so solid as to have the rigidity of glass, it would still mean that with a barometric range of only 2 inches we should be at least 3 or 4 inches nearer the centre of the earth when the mercury is at its highest than when it touches its lowest point. The experiments of the late Dr. von Rebeur Paschwitz strongly confirm Professor Darwin's conclusions, for they show that even when the barometer rises such a short distance as  $\frac{1}{25}$ th part of an inch there is a perceptible deflection of the plumb-line. In the determination of the geographical position of places observers have been puzzled at the discrepancies in the results obtained at different periods, but it now seems to be recognised that they must be largely attributed to the tilting of the ground in one direction or another, according to the disposition of atmospheric pressure, and that this is sufficient to introduce a difference of several miles in the results. It is true we are not conscious of this sinking and elevating process; it takes place at such a very imperceptible rate, perhaps occasionally 2 or 3 inches in twenty-four hours, but delicate and carefully balanced astronomical and seismological instruments tell us very clearly that the ground is never at perfect rest; it has, in fact, been likened to a jelly. Whether the variations of barometric pressure contribute directly to the production of earth tremors and earthquakes has not been definitely determined, although the connection is more than suspected. Thus in Japan, where the barometric fluctuations are more frequent and of greater extent in winter than in summer, earthquakes are fully twice as numerous in the former as in the latter season.

It is probably easier to understand that water would be influenced by changes in the weight of the superincumbent air. Our tide-tables predict the height of the tide every day, but under normal barometric conditions, the actual height being regulated by circumstances, so that corrections are necessary according as the barometer is above or below the average. In the official 'Channel Pilot,' published by the Admiralty, it is said of Dover Harbour that 'it is on record that during equinoctial spring tides with a high barometer and strong north-easterly wind, the tide at high water has receded  $4\frac{1}{2}$  feet below the datum of low water, ordinary springs.' Under the great anticyclone of January 1882, the Mediterranean at Antibes was lowered about a foot, M. Faye attributing this to the exceptionally high pressure. Curiously enough, inland lakes were similarly depressed at this time, Constance being lower than at any time during three-quarters

of a century previously, the result being that lacustrine habitations were laid bare, and nephrite axes and other ancient objects were brought to light.

The most interesting and important feature of the meteorology of the North Atlantic Ocean is the great anticyclone which lies over the Horse Latitudes practically all the year round. No doubt this permanent area of high atmospheric pressure accounts for the saucer-like depression of the surface of the ocean known as the Sargasso Sea, a region where large quantities of so-called Gulf weed accumulate, very little of the fucus escaping into higher levels. One of the derelict ships about which so much has been heard of late in and out of Parliament was the schooner *Fannie E. Wolston*, abandoned off Cape Hatteras on October 15, 1891. Drifting down into the Sargasso Sea, the helpless wanderer simply moved hither and thither within this shallow depression for more than three years before she finally disappeared.

In ballooning we have a practical illustration of the decrease of atmospheric pressure with elevation. No aéronaut would dream of filling a balloon to its utmost capacity with gas before starting on an expedition, for this would mean certain destruction. Rising higher and higher into much more attenuated air, the contained gas expands as the resistance of the atmosphere decreases, and if by miscalculation too much gas has been stored in the interior, the balloon will burst unless the aéronaut takes the necessary precaution of opening the escape valve occasionally. Parachutists afford us examples of another phase of the importance of atmospheric weight. A man drops free from a balloon at a great height from the ground, but instead of descending at a frightful velocity and being dashed to pieces, he holds above his head a strongly constructed umbrella, and the resistance of the air is so great that the descent becomes a most leisurely performance.

An interesting phenomenon related to the weight or density of the air is the variation in what is known as its diathermancy, or heat passing through it without being appreciably absorbed. The greater the tenuity of the air, the more nearly diathermanous is it. Supposing the sun's rays to be directed down a deep mine-shaft, the air at the bottom would absorb more heat directly from the rays than the air at the surface, and the latter would absorb more than the air at the top of a mountain, a fact which has nothing to do with the climate of a place. Thus, in the soft, warm weather of the Riviera, at sea-level, the solar rays are much less fierce than they are in the freezing atmosphere of Davos Platz, at an elevation of over 5,000 feet. When the solar radiation thermo-

meter rises to 130 degrees in London, we consider it a scorching day, but at Leh, in Ladakh, at a height of 11,000 feet above sea-level, and with the weight of the air about 6 pounds per square inch less than it is in the metropolis, the sun's rays, falling on the thermometer, send it up above the boiling-point of water. Many thousands of people visit the Alps every holiday season and are surprised to find how quickly, unless gloves and veils are used, the hands and face are scorched in the sunshine, but they are quite unconscious of any change in the weight or tenuity of the air, which is the principal contributory factor in encouraging the blistering effects of the solar rays.

Another physical fact depending upon barometric pressure is the temperature at which water boils. The less the weight of the air, the more readily does the vapour escape from the water, and the sooner is the point of ebullition attained. It is usual with us to say that the boiling-point of water is at  $212^{\circ}$  Fahrenheit, but this is so only at the normal pressure indicated by 30 inches of mercury in the barometer. So long as the barometer remains at this height no amount of firing and stoking will alter the boiling-point a fraction of a degree; but increase or reduce the pressure, and the boiling-point is immediately increased or reduced. Taking the extreme barometric limits for the British Isles already quoted, it is found that in Scotland, in January 1896, water had to be raised to a temperature of  $214^{\circ}$  before ebullition was complete, while in the north of Ireland, in December 1886, it only required to be raised to  $207^{\circ}$ . Ben Nevis being our highest mountain, 4,406 feet, the barometer there is nearly five inches lower than it is on the Caledonian Canal at the base, and the boiling-point on the summit is consequently lowered to an average of about  $204^{\circ}$ ; on the top of Mont Blanc it is  $185^{\circ}$ ; and at 20,000 feet and upwards, in the Andes and Himalayas,  $175^{\circ}$  and under. As the boiling-point is dependent upon pressure, it has often been used as a ready means for ascertaining the heights of places visited by travellers. However, the lowering of the boiling-point is not without its inconveniences, for at altitudes of 8,000 feet and upwards eggs, meat, potatoes, and such things, cannot be boiled. Darwin relates, in this connection, an incident during his travels in the Andes sixty years ago, when an attempt was made to boil potatoes for the party. The fire was kept going all the afternoon and evening, all through the night, and away into next day, but it was useless; the potatoes simply could not boil—it was a physical impossibility in the rarefied atmosphere of the elevated situation.

Sound travels better and further when the barometer is high than when it is low.

Nor is the variation of atmospheric pressure without direct influences on mankind. Of late years many medical men have devoted a considerable amount of attention to the density of the air as a valuable therapeutic agent in the treatment of disease, and the more advanced have urged that practitioners should regularly study the daily official weather reports so as to know the disposition of cyclones and anticyclones over our own and neighbouring countries, and to note the corresponding changes in the condition of their patients. As Dr. Lauder Brunton remarked on this point in his address to the North London Medico-Chirurgical Society, in December 1891, 'We may well fancy that the day is not far distant when warnings will be published in the newspapers, not only to seamen of approaching storms, but to invalids and people in general of the meteorological changes which will induce pain in some and nervous excitability in others, with perhaps an added hint that extra flannel should be worn by the former, and bromide of potassium, or some other nervine sedative, taken freely by the latter.'

For some diseases physicians now prescribe compressed-air baths, the treatment consisting of an occasional brief imprisonment in an air-tight room into which air is pumped until the barometer rises to 50 inches, or a pressure of 25 pounds per square inch, as against 15 pounds in the open. In this dense atmosphere the lung capacity is increased, breathing becomes easier, and respiration deeper and slower, while a very curious result is an increase in the shrillness of the voice, singers being able to rise a tone or two higher than under the ordinary conditions of existence.

Other patients are ordered to live in a more attenuated instead of in a denser atmosphere, and for this no specially constructed chamber is necessary. Invalids of this class go to reside in sheltered nooks high up in the mountains—in the Alps, the Rockies, the Andes, &c.—where the barometer is always several inches lower than it is at sea-level. In these elevated resorts the invalids find the natives provided with much larger chests than the lowlanders, and that this peculiarity is due more to the tenuity of the atmosphere than to the mode of life of the people is demonstrated by the gradual distension of the thorax of visitors who remain a few months, the chest measurement increasing by as much as 3 inches in some cases. On descending to the plain, however, the thorax, under the increased pressure, gradually contracts to its original dimensions.



When the increase or decrease of atmospheric pressure is confined within moderate limits, we are practically unconscious of any unpleasant consequences resulting therefrom. We seldom experience such a long spell of high barometer as we had in January and February 1882. At the time it was noted that complaints of headache were exceedingly frequent throughout the country, doctors attributing it to the unusual weight of the air. Under extremes of pressure, however, the consequences are not only very disagreeable but oftentimes dangerous. In the construction of the Tower and Forth Bridges, the Blackwall Tunnel, and other great engineering feats, it has been necessary for much of the work to be done in compressed-air shafts or cylinders, known as caissons, sunk in the water or the ground. Into these chambers air is forced until it is of sufficient density to support a column of mercury 120 inches or even 150 inches high—that is, equal to four or five normal ‘atmospheres.’ Elaborate precautions have to be taken in passing the workmen in and out of these structures, otherwise distressing effects are felt by even the strongest and healthiest. Spite of all the care taken, many men contract what has now come to be recognised as ‘caisson disease,’ resulting from congestion of the brain and spinal cord. There are excruciating pains from the knees upwards, headache and vertigo, and occasionally paralysis of various parts of the body. Divers suffer from similar complaints through working in compressed air under great depths of water.

Some readers will recollect the very important part played by the mere resistance of the atmosphere in insuring the safety of the five miners who, in April 1877, were imprisoned in the Tynewydd Colliery, South Wales, through the inundation of the mine. Fortunately the water rose so suddenly that the mouth of the heading was closed before the air could escape, and the men found themselves immured in a compressed-air dungeon, the great density of the air keeping the flood water at a distance. All were saved after eight days of ceaseless hewing at the solid rock by the rescuing parties.

Balloonists and mountain-climbers find they have special difficulties brought about by breathing the very thin atmosphere of the higher regions. Many accounts are on record describing the experiences of travellers at great elevations—how they have suffered from drowsiness, fatigue, difficulty in breathing, intense thirst, exhaustion, mountain-sickness, and so on. Some have described the symptoms as being of a more painful nature than even angina pectoris. With novices mountain-sickness may come



on at almost any elevation; no doubt, as in sea-sickness, the constitution of the individual has much to do with its early or late attack. Mr. Whympers, one of the most hardened of mountaineers, suffered from a severe attack in the Andes when he had attained an elevation at which his barometer had descended to the low level of 14 inches, representing an atmospheric pressure of only 7 pounds on the square inch. Of course, the climbing of mountain slopes and precipices involves much bodily exertion, and this probably intensifies the depressing sensations. Balloonists, however, are not free from the discomforts and dangers incident to an existence in a greatly rarefied air. In the balloon ascent of September 1838, Messrs. Green and Rush felt no great inconvenience in attaining an altitude of 27,000 feet—probably because there was no time to feel the full effect of the changes, for they had shot up 11,000 feet in the short space of seven minutes—but immediately Mr. Green attempted to exert himself he found that his respiration became hurried. Just twenty-four years later Messrs. Glaisher and Coxwell attained the greatest elevation ever reached by man, the balloon going up to an estimated height of 37,000 feet. At 19,000 feet they were panting for breath, at 29,000 feet their sight was failing, and later insensibility stole over them. It is a marvel how they came back again, alive and well, to what we have hitherto known as *terra firma*.

Both under excessively high and low pressure persons are liable to bleed at the nose and ears.

Enough has been said in the foregoing to show the thoughtful reader that to treat the barometer merely as a weather-glass, placing it on a level with a piece of seaweed or with the pair of figures whose movements depend upon the dryness or dampness of a piece of catgut, looking upon its frequent variations as having no other meaning than indicating some change of wind or weather, is to restrict its usefulness within very narrow limits indeed. The interest in this remarkable, although simple, instrument will be greatly increased if it is always borne in mind that the 'barometer' is still what it was when that name was first given to it by Boyle—not a weather-glass, but a weight-measurer.

HY. HARRIES.

## *Death and the Hyacinths.*

SCENE.—*A wood in summer. Tityrus and Melibœus are seated upon the root of an elm tree. Bright sunlight falls through the branches upon a belt of wild hyacinths.*

TITYRUS.

Summer is come; the forest wakes to greet him,  
And while the birds their melody renew,  
Look! the wild hyacinths come forth to meet him  
And carpet all his sunlit path with blue.

MELIBŒUS.

Turn, foolish hyacinths, your blue bells hither,  
And hear me while you dance your welcome gay;  
An hour or two, and you will fade and wither—  
It is not always cuckoo-time and May.

TITYRUS.

Let them dance on; I like them to remember  
That, out beyond the autumn mist and rain,  
Another spring shall wait on bleak December,  
And bring this purple galaxy again.

MELIBŒUS.

How vain a dream their heedlessness to flatter,  
For, when new buds are bursting on the trees,  
Another April's lavish hand may scatter  
New hyacinths, perhaps, but never these.

TITYRUS.

I cannot brook so blank an expectation,  
But with the hyacinths I fancy still  
That Death and Autumn, warring with creation,  
May tread it underfoot, but never kill.

MELIBCEUS.

Thoughtless as these, mankind but ape the chorus  
Of busy sparrows when the night is done ;  
We see the dawn, and with the day before us,  
We laugh, and dance a moment in the sun.

TITYRUS.

Nay, seek with me, to old beliefs appealing,  
Some village graveyard when the lychgate swings,  
And from the grey tower, where the swifts are wheeling,  
The slow bell smites the end of earthly things.

MELIBCEUS.

Only far gloomier evidence to borrow,  
With such cold solace as the words may give,  
That man of woman born is full of sorrow,  
And flowerlike hath so short a time to live.

TITYRUS.

Hear braver counsel ; when the lilies sickened,  
From one who dreamed of other springtimes nigh,  
That which thou sowest, how shall it be quickened  
Unless it die, thou fool, unless it die ?

MELIBCEUS.

Peace ! the debate is wandering out of season ;  
Our hyacinths may perish or survive,  
Yet death or slumber, foolishness or reason,  
Let us rejoice with them to be alive.

ALFRED COCHRANE.

## *A Boyar of the Terrible.*

*A ROMANCE OF THE COURT OF IVAN THE CRUEL,  
FIRST TSAR OF RUSSIA.*

By FRED. WHISHAW,  
AUTHOR OF 'OUT OF DOORS IN TSARLAND,' ETC.

### CHAPTER X.

#### A BEAUTY SHOW.

THE ride from Perm to Viatka is a long one, not much less than three hundred miles, and was not performed without adventure. There were wolves and robbers and 'mitails,' or blinding snowstorms, to contend with, and more than once was I of service in assisting the party out of difficulty and danger, and more than once was I amply rewarded by a kind and loving look from Vera's dark eyes and a loving whisper from her lips. Of course Andrey was soon aware of my presence or proximity, and, though he frowned savagely at me the first time that we actually met, and bade me beware how I played the fool in this matter—seeing that the journey was undertaken, as it were, by order of the Tsar—yet we did not come to actual quarrelling; for, as I explained to him, it would be the simplest thing in the world for me to carry off Vera at any moment if I desired to do so, and in the fact that I had not already done so was proof sufficient that she was safe. Andrey was sensible enough to see that this was true, and therefore—though he would rather I had stayed away—he put up with my presence and company with the best grace he could assume; and, indeed, I did not inflict myself upon him continuously, but only occasionally, for I rode in advance at times, and at others followed behind, forming a kind of scouting bodyguard to my princess.

And so Viatka was safely reached within the week, and well in advance of the appointed limit of time. And here we found the Tsar's commissioners already busy cataloguing the names of the boyars of the district, and the names and ages of their daughters.

The town was full of girls—young and old, fair and plain, merry and disconsolate. To judge from the number of young men present, there were also many of my sex situated very much as I was—that is, engaged or wishful to marry some of those who were compelled to submit themselves to the process of selection or rejection; and, taking them one with another, I do not think I have ever seen a more melancholy-looking body of men. As was right and natural, each one doubtless thought his own charmer to be the most beautiful and the most attractive of all, and therefore the likeliest to be chosen by the young Tsar; and this accounted for the melancholy looks of so many. Comparing Vera with all these others, I, too, felt mournful and despondent; for, apart from prejudice and lover's blindness, there could be little doubt that my beautiful princess was as infinitely superior to the rest as the heavens are higher than the earth. There was unspoken evidence of this in every glance of admiration lavished upon her as she walked out, and spoken testimony in plenty also, as I heard for myself many times.

'There goes one that spoils our chance!' one of a group of girls would say, as Vera passed, queenlike, down the road.

'Devil take her, yes!' said another. 'What eyes! It would console my poor Alexis to see her.'

'Pavel, look there!' another would say. 'There walks a Tsaritsa born! We are safe, my beloved!'

'Yes, she is handsome,' said Pavel, fervently, 'and the stuff Tsaritsas are made of; but——' and the young lover plunged into love's platitudes, and doubtless perjured himself by stating that, beautiful as yonder maiden was, she was not to be compared with his own Olga, or Doonya, or Marie, or Nadia.

Hour by hour the town filled with constantly arriving travelling carriages and sledges, each containing its cargo of blushing tremulous, hopeful maidenhood, and its quota of fussy and agitated and anxious parents or guardians or old family nurses. Never, surely, was so much youth and beauty collected together into one town as was now to be seen in Viatka; it was like a fair of the graces—blushes, and beauty, and laughter, and agitation, were everywhere.

Prince Mezetsky, president of the committee of three, was the object of every kind of flattery and adulation. Happy were those boyars who were acquainted with him, and could therefore put in a word or two for themselves and their daughters. But, beyond specifying what were his particular instructions as to the qualities to be looked out for in the maidens to be selected in this preliminary competition, Mezetsky would not commit himself as to the chances of any girl concerning whose prospects he was interrogated.

‘If,’ he would say, ‘she is healthy, of unstunted growth, of good colour, shapely of limb, and comely of countenance, she will extend her journey to Moscow, and beyond this I can promise nothing.’

Vera possessed all these qualities, of course, and therefore I had no hope whatever that her journey would end at Viatka, and with it her danger of being selected for undesired greatness. She was certain to be among the hundred favoured (or unfortunate) of this centre to be reserved for the Tsar’s own inspection.

There were some lovelorn girls who went about in tears, victims to the ambition of their parents, and being led like lambs to the slaughter. I think the most love-sick of these was little Princess Olga Hosinsky, of Nikolsk, in Vologda, the betrothed of my own cousin on the mother’s side, Pavel Prohorof, whose estate lay near to her own. This Olga was a girl of spirit, though her tear-laden eyes and dejected looks at this time did not testify to her stoutness of heart. But her words were brave though her bearing was not, and I was present during a conversation which proved to me that there were others who shared my Vera’s views as to the advantages, or the reverse, of a seat upon the throne of Muscovy, if shared with young Ivan-Tsar. The talk was about Ivan’s notorious savagery of disposition, and old Prince Hosinsky had used in vain every argument he could think of to gloss over the character of the young sovereign, and to paint in bright colours the magnificence and the splendour in store for her who should be chosen his bride.

‘The Tsar shall never choose me,’ she said, ‘for I shall take good care to look my very worst on the day he first sees me. I shall fall and scratch my face, and wear an unbecoming dress; I would do anything to make him turn from me with loathing. I tell you again, I would not marry the little tyrant were he emperor of all Europe.’

'Ah, but you must be very careful, my soul,' said Pavel; 'for he has pity neither for man nor woman that offends him.'

Olga laughed: 'I shall not do anything rash,' she declared; 'but I shall look to you, my Pavel, to save me from wedding the little tiger, if a dowdy dress and a scratched nose are not enough to persuade him that I am not the loveliest of his subjects.'

'But have you no ambition to be Tsaritsa of Moscow, little soul?' asked Pavel, using the fondest expression in the Russian language. Olga placed her hand in his: 'I am only ambitious to be Tsaritsa of your home and of your heart, my boyar!' she whispered. Whereupon Pavel vowed by all the Russian saints, and especially by his own particular one, St. Paul, that the sanguinary little tyrant of Moscow should never possess his beloved Olga, even though he should choose her from among ten thousand to be his bride and empress. And so it happened that Olga set out with her father and mother for the building in which the first act of this imperial comedy was to be performed, greatly comforted by the words of her lover, and in no degree influenced by those of her father, though some would say that these latter represented wisdom and the former foolishness. Yet there are those also who hold that the wisdom of loving and loyal hearts is the true wisdom, and that the wisdom of worldly ambition, and the desire for wealth and aggrandisement is the true foolishness, and of these latter am I who write.

The preliminary selection took place in a large granary, glorified now for the occasion, but used during the summer months in connection with the grain trade of the place; and here, at the appointed hour, were assembled the whole girl population of the district—all who could claim, that is, to have boyar blood running in their veins. For an hour before that chosen for the commencement of the proceedings, the large hall was filled with a crowd consisting of the fifteen hundred maidens, the competitors, together with their parents or guardians, or old nurses, and their friends. The competitors themselves were all dressed in national costume, their hair being allowed to fall in a single thick plait down their backs; the only essential difference in one costume from another lay in the magnificence or modesty of its adornment of pearls or other precious stones, and in the elaboration of the red and blue needlework that half covered the dress of each damsel. It was in vain that Olga had begged her parents to be allowed to don her most dowdy frock, and to leave at home all those strings of pearls and



other gems which usually adorned her dress on special occasions. She had found that her father and mother, though kind parents to her as a rule, were against her now in the matter upon which she had set her heart; they were but human, after all, and the prospect of having their daughter chosen as the consort of the sovereign, with all the brilliant potentialities of power and emolument to themselves which such a contingency opened out, was a prospect a little too dazzling to be lightly ignored. 'Nay, Oliushka,' the old prince had said, 'you shall wear your prettiest dress, little soul, and look your very sweetest—and who can look sweeter than our Oliushka?—and if it please God and the holy saints to place you upon the throne of Russia, there is none in the realm who would better grace the position. And though I say it, little soul, your old father will make an extremely efficient Minister of State.'

'Yes, Oliushka, and there are better things in the world than young love,' added the princess, her mother; 'I loved another when I was married to your father, but my parents were wiser than I, and knew well what was best for their child; just as we know what is best for you, little dove. So weep not, but obey, and put on your prettiest frock and the best pearl-strings, as you are bid.' Olga had not the slightest intention of weeping just now, for she had dried her tears since the moment when her mind was quite made up that under no circumstances would she permit herself to be chosen Tsaritsa against her will; but she obeyed, nevertheless, and did put on her smartest dress, as her parents desired. Pavel was among the crowd at the hall on this morning in December; but neither he nor any other person excepting the competing girls themselves were allowed to remain there during the actual business of selection. The hall was cleared, and the spectators informed that they might wait in the ante-rooms or outside in the street, or anywhere they pleased, and that those young ladies whose chances of selection did not survive the very first inspection of the ranks of beauty would soon follow their friends into the outer world. As for me, I joined my cousin Pavel, with whose anxieties I naturally felt, at this time, the greatest sympathy, and we comforted each other as best we could. Then the business began. Mezetsky and his fellows of the committee were seated, like judges, in a row, before a large table, each being provided with sheets of paper and pen and ink. The competitors were then instructed to form themselves in line, and thus to advance one by one to the table, where they would

he asked their names, and submitted the while to a casual inspection from the board of three. After the last should have visited the judges' table a list would be read out of the names of those who had failed to survive, so to speak, the preliminary examination, when these unfortunates would be requested to leave the hall and return to the consolations of their friends. This portion of the proceedings was put in hand at once, the girls advancing, a blushing, tremulous line, to the table and giving in their names. The judges showed but little consideration for the feelings of their victims, making their remarks to one another as to the good looks or otherwise of the nervous young creatures who came to give in their names without the slightest reserve, and as though they were the appointed committee sitting in judgment upon a collection of pictures rather than upon the actual throbbing and tremulous tenements of passionately excited human hearts.

'God of our fathers, what a frightful creature!' Mezetsky would observe as some wretched lady of unattractive appearance took her turn at the table; 'you might have saved us a shock and yourself the trouble of a journey by remaining at home!'

'Which of us are you looking at?' rudely added one of his fellow-judges; 'one of your eyes appears to be looking at me, and the other at Michael Ivanitch here!' Many a victim burst into tears under such unfeeling criticism as this; but some showed spirit, and gave the committee as good as they had received.

'Why could not the young Tsar send down an able-bodied committee instead of a set of blind and gibbering old fogies of a hundred years of age?' asked one, smarting under some unflattering observation of her judges; 'how can you be expected to see clearly at the distance of the table-width? Poor old gentlemen; you had better send us all up to his Majesty, and give us and him a fair chance.'

'This isn't a bad-looking face,' would be the dictum as another lady appeared at the table; 'but, Lord God, what a figure!'

'Ah! praise to the Highest!—here is a woman holds herself like a streletz!' said Mezetsky, as a fine tall girl, with a waxen Russian face and the wide and rather upturned nose admired in that country, advanced in conscious pride; 'this one will get to Moscow without much doubt.'

'Here comes one who looks as though she were Tsaritsa already,' said Michael Ivanitch, indicating Olga Hosinsky, whose turn it was to approach.

'Pass on, sweetheart, thy chance is a rare one! Remember me kindly if the Tsar choose thee for his bride!' said Mezetsky, kissing his hand; 'and a pleasant journey to Moscow!'

All this I heard from Vera and Olga, and from others besides; for there were many tongues wagging that day, and nothing that was said by the judges, either flattering or the reverse, was allowed to pass unremarked upon for lack of repetition.

As for my princess, what tongue, what pen could describe her loveliness and her supremacy on that morning? Her simple Russian national dress suited her perfectly; she looked what she was, a Queen—one of those intended by Nature to rule over the hearts of men; as superior to the fairest and stateliest of those other Viatka maidens as the Volga is to the Ufa. Even Olga, who was really a beautiful girl and held herself well besides, looked plain and insignificant beside my princess; and when it came to Vera's turn to pass before the three judges, those distinguished boyars made no attempt to disguise their admiration, but 'oh'd' and 'ah'd' in her face in a manner to make her flush with scorn and anger—in which state of mind, as I knew well, she was more beautiful, if possible, than ever; and ended by standing up, all three in a row, and bowing to the ground, greeting her as Tsaritsa, and closing their books as though there could be no further need of selection.

Vera came out of the hall very angry, taking no notice of the admiration and surprise her splendid appearance caused among those who awaited their friends without. She passed by her brother unheeding him; she took no notice of old Tatyána, who cried and wiped her eyes in her joy and pride; and she came!—oh, generous, kind, splendid princess—she came straight to me and gave me her hand before all: 'Take me from this city of foolishness and vanity, Sasha,' she said, 'take me where I can breathe God's air and see the pines; I am suffocated in this place!'

So my Queen and I rode forth into the woods and galloped our discontent away in our old familiar fashion; and during the ride we renewed our vows that never, never should this flower be plucked from my bosom, not for all the ambition of all the Stroganofs and Krilofs, nor yet for the terror of the wrath of the young Tsar himself.

We agreed, moreover, that on arrival in Moscow I should appeal to the Tsar, on the plea of personal friendship, to exempt from candidature the maiden pledged to be my wife, mentioning

no names and, if possible, without allowing Ivan to set eyes upon Vera; for, as I said, 'if the young Tsar be allowed to see you, my soul, he will be more than human if he does not desire to better his intimacy with you!'

'Bah!' said Vera; 'then, for mercy's sake, keep me out of his sight!'

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## CHAPTER XI.

### BOYAR AND HIGHWAYMEN.

FROM Viatka to Moscow is a long ride, and I shall not weary either myself or those of my descendants who may be destined to read these records by entering into detail as to our adventures during the weeks we occupied in travelling through that Volga-washed district. One adventure, however, I will put down as being somewhat entertaining and peculiar, and as an example of the kind of dangers and difficulties which constantly assailed us during that long journey.

Vera and I, having by this time quite made up our minds as to the proper course to be pursued on arrival in Moscow, felt somewhat more at our ease and happier and lighter of heart. Andrey Krilof, on the other hand, was more arrogant than ever by reason of the many and marked compliments and flattery paid to his sister at Viatka, and the consequent strengthening of his hopes with regard to her chances at Moscow.

He behaved as though he were already the brother-in-law of the Tsar, and treated his servants, and even tried to treat me also, as the dust beneath his feet; but it was never the way of the Stroganofs to submit to anything of this kind from prince or peasant or devil, and I place it upon record with satisfaction that Andrey Krilof received as good as he gave in all haughtiness and arrogance of deportment.

One day I happened to be riding a few miles behind the rest of the party. I had seen wolves about, and though my beloved Borka and Borza were not at hand to assist me, my sporting instincts were strong enough to cause me to abandon my place at the side of Vera's travelling sledge, and ride off into the forest in pursuit. This must not be considered an unloverlike or careless proceeding on my part, because it was partly for Vera's sake that

I decided to chase those wolves ; for if I had allowed them to follow us stealthily unmolested, it was extremely likely that others would join them during the day, and that by the evening a pack large enough to be bold and therefore dangerous might have assembled on our flank. So I pursued those wolves, three or four of them, and old Daniel contrived to keep them in sight, in spite of the depth of the snow and the thickness of the covert through which we had to follow the animals. Occasionally I fired my pistols at the brutes, and I had wounded, I think, one of them when I found that my ammunition had completely run out, and that my pistols were no longer of any use to me. These weapons were somewhat new to me at the time, and I have no doubt I burned the powder more wastefully than I should have done at a later period, when pistols had become a comparatively common arm.

Then I turned Daniel's head towards the road again, and we made the best of our way after the travelling party, whom I hoped to overtake in an hour or two.

I had ridden in pursuit of them several miles, when I heard the clattering of hoofs in front of me, and imagined that I had already overtaken the hindermost portion of the party, when to my surprise I found that this was not the case. Two strangers, mounted upon excellent Cossack horses something like my own, and heavily armed with pistols, axes, and knives, were cantering swiftly in front of me. I took them, at the first, for boyars, travelling like ourselves to Moscow ; but when they turned round and perceived me, I soon found that in this I was mistaken.

The instant the men saw me they pulled up and waited for me, drawing their pistols and levelling them at my head.

'Stop,' one cried, 'and explain who you are and where you are going to.'

'And who are you that ask ?' I said, casting about in my mind for a way out of this difficulty ; for when unloaded pistols encounter loaded ones there is certainly difficulty in the situation.

'Rulers of the road and tribute collectors, from Kostroma to Susdal,' said one of the two, with inconceivable haughtiness.

'By what right rulers of the road ?' I said, 'and on whose behalf tribute collectors ?'

'By the right of might and our weapons,' said the fellow, 'and on whose behalf but our own—the Tsar's, think you ? God is in heaven, my friend, and the Tsar is far away !'

'But I also have pistols, grand-dad,' I cried, seizing one and levelling it at him—I did not think it necessary to mention that it was unloaded—'and as for tribute, the Tsar shall have it, or none!'

'You are a brave boy,' said my interrogator. 'Put down that pistol, and we shall be the better friends; I admire spirit. Tell me first, do you belong to the rich party which is a few miles in advance of us?'

'On the contrary,' I said, an idea just coming into my head, 'on the contrary, I am hoping that before very long that same party, or rather the money and valuables they possess, may belong to me.' The two robbers looked at one another.

'Indeed!' they said. 'Whence come you, then? Not from these parts, that is certain, for here we rule supreme, and none dare interfere in our domains, from Susdal, as I say, to Kostroma.'

'I have followed them all the way from Viatka,' I said, without hesitation, 'watching my opportunity. They are a strong party.'

'So?' said my friend. 'And armed?'

'Heavily,' I replied. 'But I happen to have an understanding with the coachman of the prince's own travelling sledge, and also with one or two of the armed servants, and at a certain spot agreed upon there is to be an event.'

The robbers glanced at each other once more, and held a whispered conversation. Presently the bigger of the two addressed me again:

'My friend and I are agreed,' he said, 'that with so great a prize at our very hands, it would be a pity to quarrel with one who appears to have an equal right with ourselves.'

'And who is well provided with pistols,' I added boldly, and laughing aloud.

'Two pistols are better than one,' he said.

'I shoot equally well with either hand,' I retorted, covering, as I spoke, each man with a pistol. As a matter of fact, I do not think I had ever tried to shoot with my left hand; but the expedient was very successful.

'Stop!' said my friend, both men recoiling. 'It is better, as I say, to arrange such things amicably, especially when—as it appears—your plans have been already prepared, and therefore we propose a combination and an equal division. Our assistance will render your success certain. We should succeed without you; but we prefer to offer you one-third share of the booty, in consideration of the plan you have laid.'



After some show of reluctance, I accepted this proposal, and proceeded to explain exactly where the robbery was to be effected. Now, as I was aware of the place at which the Krilofs had resolved to pass the night, I fixed upon a spot beyond this, in order to gain at least the hours of this night for the elaboration of my plan. The simplest thing would have been, no doubt, to fall upon these men—strike one down, and then attack the other; but of course the danger of such a proceeding would be great, seeing that they were armed with pistols and I not, and the second man would in all probability shoot me dead while I was busy negotiating the first. Hence I was anxious, though, I think, no coward, to elaborate some plan by which I should save my own skin and make sure of theirs, and I fixed upon a place *beyond* that already agreed upon for the night-halt of the party in front of us.

We therefore followed at a discreet distance, not showing ourselves to the travellers, and when their resting-village was reached, we skirted the place by striking into the forest and riding round it, coming out upon the high road once more about two miles farther on. Here we found an outlying peasant's hut, the owner of which, on seeing my companions, instantly fell to vigorously crossing himself, praying and blubbing, and finally disappeared into the forest behind the hut, in the extremity of terror; and from the conduct and aspect of the man I rightly inferred that he was acquainted with the persons into whose society destiny had brought me.

I hoped by remaining awake while these men slept to secure at least one of them alive, in which case I should have cared nothing for his fellow single-handed. But in this I was disappointed, for neither one nor the other, it appeared, had any intention to retire to rest. Unfortunately a bottle of vodka, which is the favourite drink of the peasants, was found by them, and this kept them awake and employed. They produced cards, also, and played together, drinking and quarrelling, until their disagreements became so acute that I had great hopes they would relieve me of further embarrassment by cutting each other's throats.

This desirable termination to their game was not arrived at, however; though, when the stormy play ceased, my opportunity came. One of the fellows being half drunk, complained of the heat and left the hut to cool himself in the outer air—the atmosphere within being in very truth of the most stifling, owing to the smallness of the room and the largeness of the stove.



'Now,' thought I, 'is my chance,' and I was about to spring upon my friend and account for him, when he saw my movement and divined my purpose, and before I could stir a finger he had snapped a pistol at my head—the shot flying wide.

I drew my own weapon, but laughed unconcernedly.

'That was an unfriendly act,' I said; 'what made you shoot at me, friend?' The fellow affected to make a joke of the matter, as I did.

'I thought it had suddenly struck you that the booty would divide better into two than three!' he said. His remark gave me an idea.

'You were wrong there,' I replied. 'I had not thought of it; but since you suggest it, and since your companion appears to be a poor-spirited kind of a fellow, what say you to making such a division as you suggest—instead of three parts, two parts? There is a lot of money, I can tell you; half of it would make a man rich for a year!'

The fellow's face instantly assumed a sly and avaricious expression; I longed to jump upon him and strangle him; but I saw that my present plan would work: his countenance promised me this much, therefore I kept my hands off him and adhered to the safe game.

'Vainka is a fool,' he said, 'and a coward too; I have long desired a better partner, and this, I think, I have found in yourself. Will you shoot him or I?'

'Neither,' I said, 'but we will together fall upon him and bind him as he enters the hut, and to-morrow we will leave him here, bound, for the peasant to find; probably the peasant will knock him on the head with his axe, which will spare us so much blood-guilt; there is a special curse against the murder of an associate. I prefer to leave him to the peasant; if you prefer to shoot him for yourself, then shoot him!'

My friend spat on the ground and then crossed himself, glancing up at the sacred picture in the corner of the room as he did so.

'Save us from special curses,' he said; 'have it your way.'

There was a set of driving-reins lying on the bench by the stove, and the fellow cut this in two as he spoke. He made a running noose of one rope, I did the same with the other, though I could scarcely work for suppressed laughter; it seemed so droll to me that this rascal was about to tie up his comrade at my bidding and for my benefit.

'You pin him as he enters the room,' he said, 'and I will bind his arms; hold him tight, he is as slippery as an eel!' I promised to be careful; I promised myself, moreover, that if once I had my arms around the fellow he should not escape me. Then I took my stand at the door, and very soon the victim came staggering in.

I performed my share of the business very successfully, in spite of much struggling and kicking and terrible swearing; while Matyan—my fellow-conspirator—did his part in securing the man's arms and legs with the rope. Then we placed him upon the floor by the stove, having first gagged him; and half my work was accomplished. With his companion I had little difficulty, for he did not seem to suspect me after our joint treachery upon his partner, and I easily found an opportunity to spring upon him before he could seize his pistols, and after a brief struggle I not only had him down upon the ground, but also securely tied up like his fellow. Then I removed the gag of this latter, in order that the two might enjoy the comfort, during the rest of the night, of mutual recrimination; after which I cordially thanked my friend Matyan for his assistance in securing Vainka, and having informed them that my pistols were unfortunately unloaded and therefore useless, or time might have been saved at the beginning of our acquaintance, I wished them a good night and rode back to the village, where my company were still at supper. Here, also, I found the peasant, the proprietor of the hut in which I had left my two friends, busily repeating, with many lamentations, the tale of our arrival and of our threats and terrible appearance. He was entreating Andrey Krilof to arm his servants and go forth to secure the robbers while they slept, for, he declared, if not attacked to-night, they would certainly themselves attack on the morrow. On seeing me, this worthy serf fell into violent hysterics and was with difficulty appeased, but eventually, hearing that both of the real miscreants were securely bound, he hastened away to vent his wrath upon them, armed with a stout driving-whip.

'They have turned me out of my hut many a cold night,' he cried, 'and stolen my vodka and provisions—devil take his own—and to-night I am going to square the account!'

'Don't murder them with the axe, grand-dad!' I cried after him.

'Not I,' said he; 'I am no shedder of blood—God's curse is upon such! But the Scripture has nothing against the using of whips!' And of his rights with regard to whipping, this good

man made, I believe, the very fullest use that night ; for when we drove up to the hut on the following morning in order to pick up my prisoners and carry them off to the nearest selo (head village), we found those two formidable persons reduced, through much flogging, to the saddest condition of piteous helplessness ; while our sturdy serf was quite tired out with his exertions. He returned the whip with thanks for its use, remarking that there must be great virtue in flogging, since assuredly these two ruffians had never prayed so much in all their lives as they had done on this night.

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## CHAPTER XII.

### A WOLF-PACK.

I HAVE mentioned that wolves had begun to show themselves in some numbers ; the weather at this time was very cold and severe, and doubtless the famishing animals were rendered bold by starvation, as they invariably are ; indeed, I have never before or since seen a pack of wolves either so numerous or so formidable as that which suddenly assailed us on the morning following my adventure with the road-robbers.

We had called, as we passed, at the peasant's hut in order to pick up these two amiable persons ; for it was our intention to carry them with us as far as Susdal, there to deliver them into the hands of justice ; and when we had secured them and packed them safely in the last sledge—that which contained the chests and parcels in which were stored Vera's wardrobe and other properties—we continued our journey through the forest.

Once or twice I noticed during the morning that there were wolves about, for occasionally my practised hunter's eye would catch sight for an instant of the grey skulking form and sharp snout of one of these cunning creatures, gliding noiselessly among the trees on our flank ; but throughout the early part of the day the wolves were mere units, and as such gave me no alarm for the safety of the party, for I knew well that there is only danger to be apprehended from these formidable but cautious animals when their own large numbers inspire them with courage to attack. A few wolves are no more to be feared than as many foxes ; a large company of wolves is one of the most dangerous and awe-inspiring things that the mind of man can contemplate.

There had been a snowfall during the night, and we had sent forward the two pair-horsed *Kibitka*-sledges in order to make a road for that of Vera and her brother, with whom was also old Tatyána the nurse, which thus travelled last of the three. Needless to say, I was mounted upon old Daniel as usual, and rode close to Vera's sledge, as I often did, conversing with her or with the others as we went.

'There are wolves about this morning, Sasha!' said Vera; 'I have seen several.' Old Tatyána crossed herself devoutly.

'God save us from them!' she said; 'where are they, boyar? I never saw one yet, though I have lived near upon seventy years.'

'You will see some to-day, Tatyána,' I cried, laughing; 'for it begins to look as though we were to see more than we need this morning—look! there goes one—and there's another!'

Sure enough, there were two visible together, cantering easily along through the trees on our right.

'Holy St. Vladimir, equal to the Apostles!' said Tatyána, devoutly, 'is there any danger from them, boyar?'

'None at present,' I said; 'those two grey fellows must multiply themselves by twenty before there is much danger from their cowardly kind. See, I will give those two a shot from my pistol, and you will probably see no more of them!'

With the words I fired a shot.

At the unexpected sound, the three horses drawing the ponderous travelling carriage all started violently and shied to the left of the road. The sledge struck the root of a tree and tipped. Those within kept their seats with difficulty, but before the vehicle righted itself, Ivan the coachman lost his balance and fell off the box into the road, while the horses started at full speed after their companions, some hundred yards ahead, nearly overrunning old Daniel and me, who just managed to swerve out of their way. I saw Andrey Krilof cleverly secure the reins before they could get twisted and entangled among the scudding feet of the horses, and seeing that the party in the sledge were therefore in no danger of being upset, I stopped Daniel in order to look after old Ivan's welfare, he having been sent spinning through the air into deep snow.

As I turned, I saw a sight which instantly revealed to me an as yet unguessed peril; for I was just in time to perceive at least twenty wolves appear, mysteriously, from nowhere, fall upon poor Ivan in the twinkling of an eye, and tear him, in an instant of time, to pieces, snarling and fighting over the bleeding remains

which had formed a living, breathing creature but a moment before, as though their claim to the food were unquestionable. It was not a pleasant sight. I was very young then and unaccustomed to scenes of bloodshed and horror, and the spectacle turned me sick for an instant. Nevertheless, I discharged a pistol into the midst of the group, and sent Daniel scudding, without a moment's delay, after the sledges, in order to warn my friends of the danger threatening us. For I knew now that we had a large pack to deal with, and that, having tasted blood, the savage brutes would thirst for more and would be rendered tenfold more formidable than before.

Away flew Daniel down the road. The good horse had seen the wolves, and knew just as well or better than I did that this was a serious matter, and not an ordinary wolf-hunt, with Borka and Borza at our flank and a couple or so of wolves scudding on in front; but, if a wolf-hunt at all, a hunt with the wolves in the wrong position. Away flew Daniel, and as we started down the road I heard the wolves give tongue like so many grey death-hounds, as they too started in pursuit of us. Very soon I overtook the sledge which bore my princess, and now I held a hurried consultation with Andrey and his sister. Vera looked a little white as she turned and saw the group of now noisy brutes close behind us, but she smiled reassuringly as she caught my eye, and said that she felt no fear. As for Tatyána, she was weeping and babbling a mixture of prayers and heathenish invocations to the *Liéshui*, or wood-spirits, crossing herself wildly and glancing frantically at the wolves every other moment. Andrey, like a sensible man, devoted all his energies to keeping his horses straight, for a mistake or a shy on the part of driver or horses respectively might, he knew, have fatal consequences. I easily kept up with Andrey's three flying horses, and so we galloped on for four or five miles, without much change in the position of affairs, excepting that the wolves gradually waxed bolder; and whereas they had been content, at the first, to follow yelping and howling at our heels, a number of them now cantered alongside of us, at either side, and occasionally even darted towards the *prestyashki*, the two outer horses, as though intent upon pulling them down; but up to now no wolf had actually dared to spring upon us, their hearts apparently always failing at the very last moment.

Nevertheless, they came nearer at each menace, and at last one actually had the audacity to spring up at old Daniel's throat.

Of course I was ready for him, and so was Daniel; my dagger sheathed itself in his neck, and as he fell howling to the rear, old Daniel very cleverly administered a kick which sent him flying among his companions, and provided them with a ready-made dinner which submitted to be eaten without preliminary struggling.

This did not discourage the brutes, however; on the contrary, it appeared only to embolden them, and their attacks upon the two unshafed horses attached to the sledge became with every moment more serious, until at length those poor creatures lost heart and courage, and stumbled and panted, fighting bravely with tooth and hoof the while, and it became evident that before very long they must succumb to the attacks made upon them. I was able to protect the horse which happened to be on my side of the road by slashing with my drawn sword at those wolves which sprang continually at him to pull him down, and therefore when the climax came, it came in consequence of the fall of the other.

Quite suddenly the far horse stumbled and fell, and was covered in an instant by a snarling crowd of his enemies. Fortunately in his fall he tore away the single halter which attached him to the front of the carriage, for these *prestyashki* are harnessed in this simple manner in rustic Russia, and therefore when he stumbled and fell, the big sledge merely bumped against him, and passed with a great jolt over two or three of those wolves which clung to him—they howling with pain, but continuing to hold on to their victim—and proceeded onwards with two horses instead of three. But the moment had come to end this dangerous state of affairs. I drove Daniel through the thronging wolves to the side of the carriage, striking and stabbing at the brutes as I went; I leaned over and cried out—for the tumult of the howling wolves made it necessary at this time to shout aloud in order to be heard:

‘Come, Vera, Daniel shall carry us both; you, Andrey, mount the shafter as best you can, and let Tatyána scramble up behind you—then help me to cut the traces!’

Andrey did not lose his head; there is good stuff in the Krilofs. He seized Tatyána and pushed her unceremoniously upon the shaft-horse, shouting in her ear to hold on for her life as best she could by mane, and rein, and ears. It was wonderful to see that old woman climb for her life, and grip and hold on like any urchin of twelve! Then Andrey leapt upon the shafter's back behind her. Meanwhile, Vera had stood up at my bidding, and I took her by the waist in my left arm and hoisted her upon Daniel's



back, behind me. Several wolves sprang up and grabbed at her, but I lifted her so high that, save for a tear or two in the skirt of her dress, she seemed to have escaped their attacks altogether. Then Andrey and I hacked the shafter free of the carriage, and he sped out from between the shafts, with a neigh of delight and relief, as though his double burden were the merest trifle in the world to him—which perhaps it was, for he was indeed a splendid horse, and second only to Daniel.

As for Daniel himself, he carried Vera and me as though there were no more weight on his back than a snail bears when he carries his shell. And so, hacking, and stabbing, and lunging at our assailants—Vera doing her full share in the defence—we flew in pursuit of the rest of the party, followed by Andrey and the loudly praying Tatyána.

As for the third horse, I had freed him with a cut of my sword; but he used his freedom indiscreetly, for instead of accompanying us—when he might have saved his life as we did ours—he took a course of his own into the heart of the forest, pursued by a company of the wolves (of whom he thus relieved us), and without doubt he was eventually by them pulled down and devoured, far from all hope of succour; we heard no more of him.

Freed of the heavy travelling carriage, we were now able to push along at a greatly accelerated speed, and we soon overtook the two sledges, whose occupants were doing all they could do to whip and encourage their horses to increased exertions. Both pairs were travelling at full gallop, the drivers waving whips and shouting, and the servants and prisoners all bawling and praying together—creating such a din as we dashed past them, that it was impossible to gather a word of what was said.

There must have been half a hundred of wolves in pursuit of us by this time, and the terror of these poor people was natural and legitimate.

As for ourselves, however, we were no longer in great danger, for now that we had overtaken and passed the rest of the party, the wolves no longer harried us, but confined their attention to the sledges and their occupants, recognising that here was to be had a better chance of success, with less risk of getting themselves wounded by the swords and knives which Andrey and I, and also Vera, wielded with so much effect. So on flew old Daniel in comparative safety. And as for me, with my arm about my princess and her breath warm upon my neck, I felt that I could gladly ride on in this manner for a great many miles, and was inclined



to be sorry when, half an hour later, the church and houses of Susdal appeared in sight.

'Our ride is nearly over, Vera, my soul!' I said; 'there is Susdal in the distance. Why are you pale?' I added in some concern, noticing that my lovely companion drooped and looked white and worn. 'You are not frightened, Vera? There is no longer danger, sweetheart; be comforted!'

'I am not frightened,' she replied, smiling; 'dangers are no dangers with thee at hand, my Sasha; but if I am pale I have a reason that you know not of!'

I concluded that the girl was weary, and said, 'Be comforted, for you shall rest in a few minutes;' but before, almost, I had completed the sentence, Vera suddenly swayed and fell forwards, nearly slipping out of my arms to the ground, and I saw that she had fainted.

It was impossible to stop, for the sledges were still following us at full gallop, and I could hear from the variety of noises accompanying their advance that the wolves were still around them and in full attack. Therefore I firmly and tenderly took my princess to my heart, and abandoning the reins, allowed old Daniel to take his own way—which he could always be trusted to do with discretion; and so we galloped together into the town of Susdal, I overwhelmed with surprise that my beautiful, brave Vera, whose spirit I had never before known to fail, should have so entirely succumbed now at the very moment of safety, and after having carried herself unflinchingly through the terrible dangers of the last hour. I had no idea of the real cause of her collapse, nor dreamed of the heroism with which she had supported an intolerable anguish so long as betrayal of her condition might have constituted a danger to her companions. But when I had carried her into the great room of the inn and laid her upon a divan, I found to my horror that Vera's skirt was all soaked with blood, and that one of her feet had been most terribly lacerated by the teeth of a thrice-accursed wolf. This had happened at the moment when I lifted her from the carriage to the saddle; but with extreme fortitude she had concealed from me all knowledge of the circumstance and of the agony she must have suffered by reason of it.

Almost immediately after our arrival the two sledges dashed up to the gate of the inn, the horses steaming and snorting; the servants chattering and quaking, and crossing themselves in gratitude for their escape. I left Vera in charge of Tatyána, and

went out to see whether all was well with men [and horses. All appeared to be well, save for a few slight wounds about the necks and flanks of the panting steeds; but I could see nothing of my prisoners, the robbers, Matyan and his companion.

I inquired for them. Gregory, the driver of the luggage sledge, in which they had been stowed, removed his fur cap and scratched his head.

‘The wolves nearly caught me, boyarin!’ he said.

‘Well,’ I replied, ‘what of that—where are the prisoners?’

‘It was necessary to delay the wolves, your mercifulness!’ said Gregory. ‘It was necessary to give them something to keep them employed in order to get a good start of them.’

I began to have an inkling of the fellow’s meaning, and the thought ran cold to my heart.

‘Well,’ I said, ‘go on; where are the prisoners?’

‘Better an accursed robber caught in the act of devising a robbery and violence, than a good horse,’ faltered Gregory.

‘Do you mean that you threw them to the wolves in order to gain time and thus escape yourself?’ said I.

‘One by one, your mercifulness, first the little one and then the big one; but for that the horses would have been pulled down, and I too should have been lost, as well as they! These malefactors must have died, you see, anyhow!’

Ah, well! it is good, after all, to reflect that Matyan and his partner were of some use to the community in their dying; they certainly never were in their living. And perhaps a single instant of anguish at the teeth of the wolves is better than the prolonged misery of the knoot, and this would certainly have been their fate at Susdal. Perhaps old Gregory was perfectly right, though his action seemed to me horrible and inhuman. As for me, I had Vera to think about, for though old Tatyána was a mistress in the art of healing by herbs and incantations, that torn foot of my beautiful princess did not yield at once to her ministrations, and we were obliged to rest for the greater part of a week in Susdal, during which time Vera suffered much pain, so much that my heart was embittered against the wolf tribe, and I vowed a terrible and implacable vengeance against them for ever, for this their sin; and I may here add that since that day I have never spared a wolf when I came across one.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

## THE TERRIBLE TSAR.

Moscow was full and brimming over with the population that flocked to it from all parts when we at length arrived at the capital. We were among the late arrivals, for Perm is one of the most distant of all places in the empire; and it was well for us all that both the Krilofs and the Stroganofs possess houses of their own in Moscow, otherwise we might have found difficulty in engaging accommodation suitable for our position. The scene in the streets of the city was very like that with which we had already become familiar in Viatka, only that the standard of beauty here was higher—since the hundreds of maidens perambulating the streets of Moscow represented those already selected in the various centres for their good appearance; while in Viatka, girls of every shade of beauty and ugliness were to be found, no classification having yet been made.

Assuredly I never should have supposed that so much loveliness existed in the whole world as was now assembled and at large in the capital of the Tsar; and even the most beautiful now realised that her chances were not so great as she had hoped or supposed, or perhaps feared, if, like Olga Hosinsky and my own Vera, she happened to be in love with some meaner mortal, and had no ambition to be the chosen of the Tsar. It was still two or three days from the date appointed for the great selection, and I was anxious to obtain the ear of the Tsar in order to entreat him to have compassion upon me in so far as to exempt my princess from competition with her peers; but, on the second day after our arrival in the city, ere yet I had succeeded in gaining an interview with his Majesty, as I walked with Andrey and his sister in the streets, I suddenly and unexpectedly encountered the Tsar.

The last two years or two years and a half, since the day we had parted, had wrought an immense change in my young master. I had left behind me a poor, ill-dressed, boyar-trodden child whose innate majesty showed through all the studied neglect of his upbringing; but I now saw before me the perfect realisation of very majesty itself. Ivan was walking with Vorontzoff, the young boyar on whose behalf he had defied Shuisky, and

when his eye fell upon me he recognised me at once, and his face softened into a smile of welcome.

'See, Vorontzoff! Who comes here?' he said. Vorontzoff showed some signs of recognition, but was uncertain as to my identity.

'I seem to remember the face,' he said, 'but fail to attach a name to it!'

'It is Stroganof, Sasha Stroganof, one of my godfathers in good,' said the Tsar, 'one of those who opened my eyes for me and first taught me to discern good from evil!'

It was a kind and gracious speech, and I have never forgotten to be grateful to my master for it.

'Dost remember Adashef and my young rascals of footpads, Sasha?' he added, embracing me before all the people and laughing aloud, 'and the ducking thou gavest me in the Moskva? Upon my honour, that same ducking washed more of the devil out of me than you would easily believe!'

As for me, I stood speechless, foolishly gazing in admiration upon my young sovereign, who kindly patted my shoulder and laughed at my embarrassment.

'And who are your friends?' he said, regarding Andrey closely and Vera still more so. Then it suddenly struck me that this meeting was, after all, very unfortunate; for what if the Tsar were to take a first-sight liking to my beautiful princess? I suppose I grew suddenly pale, for the Tsar gazed curiously in my face and rallied me.

'What is it, man? I am not a ghost to be afraid of! One would suppose you had forgotten our ancient friendship and my claims upon you!' Then I found my tongue.

'No, indeed, Tsar Ivan Vasilitch!' I said; 'and if I possess indeed a claim upon thy goodness, there is that I desire to ask of thee. May I come to-day or to-morrow in order to lay my petition at thy feet?'

'Say it at once, man,' he said, 'say it at once! I am one whose humour must be taken at the flood. I am in the best mood, being pleased to see thee, to-day; to-morrow I may be a different man altogether, and disinclined to grant favours. But first, who are these?'

'The Boyarin Andrey Krilof and his sister,' I said hesitatingly, while Krilof inclined his head with much dignity, and Vera blushed and bowed also.

'Oh, the Krilofs!' said Ivan, scrutinising anew the faces of

brother and sister, but lingering, I noticed, much longer when his eyes rested on Vera's beautiful features. 'And now, what of this petition?'

'Pardon, sire!' I stammered, 'the boon I would ask of you is very private.'

'Oh, you need not mind Vorontzoff,' cried the Tsar, laughing; 'and as for these others, they are your private friends—speak on, then; the present time is your own.' I advanced close up to Ivan's side and whispered in his ear that I was in distress lest he should select for his bride one in whom my happiness was for ever centred. Ivan laughed.

'Is she beautiful?' he asked aloud. My position was the most embarrassing that can be imagined.

'The lover must always reply "Yes" to such a question!' I faltered. 'Other eyes might possibly judge differently!'

'There are some,' said Ivan, significantly, glancing at Vera as he spoke, 'there are some as to whose loveliness all eyes must judge alike. I do not ask of you names or descriptions; but I will say this, that if I were to accede to such a petition as this from each boyar who is in love, then there would remain to the Tsar only unlovable maidens from among whom to make his choice! It is impossible, as you must see, to promise anything in this matter; but it would be hard indeed if, among nearly two thousand beautiful maidens, I should happen to choose that one in whom, as you say, your happiness is centred. Therefore, be comforted, and grudge not to the Tsar his free choice of a bride. It has ever been the privilege of the Russian sovereign to select his bride from among all, unreservedly; you know this.' I knew it, of course.

'Then I will trust to your generosity, sire,' I said, 'to spare my ewe lamb!'

'Nay, not that!' he replied, 'not that! Better not to tell me which is your ewe lamb, lest my attention be called to her by this; but trust rather to the law of chances, which shows that I must first reject two thousand of the ewe lambs, as you call them, of others, before I select your ewe lamb!'

This was poor comfort, but as it was quite clear that Ivan intended to have his own way in this matter, I saw that it would be useless to reiterate my petition, and that Vera and I must indeed depend upon the rulings of destiny, and, if matters went against us, trust to our own selves to set them right again.

'Is that all you have to ask of me?' asked Ivan, addressing me, but staring at Vera; 'ask anything you please, and come

to me when you like—we are old friends, remember. Farewell for the present; farewell you also, my pretty one,' he added, kissing his hand to Vera; 'we shall meet, I dare say, you and I, the day after to-morrow!' Ivan glanced at me rather impatiently, I thought, and more lingeringly at Vera, and departed. He did not look at Krilof again.

Andrey laughed aloud as the Tsar disappeared.

'That was a sad misfire for you, Stroganof,' he said; 'but be comforted, for if the Tsar had granted your petition, I should have stepped forward and said that in this matter the lady concerned should in justice be consulted, and also her friends!'

Vera flashed a look of anger at her brother. 'Andrey,' she said scornfully, 'in order to be brother-in-law to this little tyrant, would gladly see his sister rendered miserable for life! My brothers are merchants like thine, Sasha; nevertheless, I know what I know.'

'And what is that, my sweet sister?' asked Andrey, still laughing, for he believed that he discerned victory already at hand, and his heart was light.

But Vera vouchsafed no reply whatever; and, as for me, all I could say was—for I could think of nothing wiser at the moment—that I wished we were at Kamka instead of in the streets of Moscow; for then I should give myself the great satisfaction of chastising him as he deserved, whereas here I was obliged to put up with his foolery, though it sickened me.

'Why so?' he said; 'fight me, if you desire it, here; I am ready! Or come down, if you prefer it, to the banks of the Moskva, and have this matter out there!' Andrey certainly had spirit; our fights always ended in the same way, yet he was ever ready for another. I think I accommodated him that afternoon, but I cannot remember with certainty. We were still boys in years, and boyish in our ways; and the fights were constant between us, and this is why I cannot be certain as to whether we fought that day or not.

But this I know, that whereas the Tsar Ivan had been, though firm, friendly disposed towards me on the first day, he was angry and unfriendly on the next, and stamped his foot when he saw me, and frowned, looking from me to Vera as though incensed to observe that I was again in the society of this beautiful maiden.

'I have thought over that which you said to me yesterday, Stroganof,' he said; 'your petition is unpatriotic and disloyal.' I coloured and bowed, but said nothing. Ivan stamped his foot again.

'Well, have you no tongue?' he said angrily.

'You are Tsar and I am your boyar,' I said, 'and the Tsar's word is the law; but if you desire to know my opinion in this matter, I will be bold to tell it you, as I dared to speak up in another matter two years ago; and it is that I like your treatment of your boyars and people no better now than I did then. Then you robbed them of their purses and property; now you would rob them of their love and life-happiness.'

The Tsar raised his spiked staff with the old passionate gesture, but let it fall again without assaulting me.

'Stop,' he said, 'you are wrong. I rob no one. It is the recognised right and privilege of the Grand Dukes of Russia to choose for their brides the loveliest and the best. Do you grudge to your sovereign the exercise of his right?'

'The Tsar should have the best,' I admitted; 'he should have that maiden who is most capable of making him happy and contented; there are hundreds beautiful enough for this. But the Tsar must have other things besides beauty, such as the willingness of the maiden, without which all her loveliness would not avail to delight him. A weeping bride brings no content to the home!'

'She who is chosen to be the Tsaritsa sheds no tears!' said Ivan, flushing.

'There are those who would die rather than sit beside you upon the throne!' I said boldly, for I had worked myself up by this time to that pitch of recklessness that I cared not what I said. Also I happened to catch sight of Vera's face at the moment, and the flash of approval she gave me would have carried me to any length of disloyalty and audacity.

'There you lie,' said Ivan, looking very pale, and his eyes assuming that bird-of-prey expression which I knew so well two years before.

'You lie,' he said, stamping his foot, 'there are none such; if my boyars are traitors, the maidens know better what is due to their sovereign!'

'I am no liar,' I said, 'and no traitor; and this you know, Ivan Vasilitch!'

For answer, the Tsar raised his spiked staff and banged it down on the ground, pinning my foot to the wooden side-pavement upon which we stood. I do not think that I flinched; Vera did not know that I was touched, as I afterwards discovered, but the Tsar did. I was not seriously hurt, though two of my toes were badly



gored. Ivan glared at me for a moment, the spike still pinning me to the ground. Then his face softened, and he drew the staff away.

'By my soul, Sasha Stroganof, you are a brave man,' he said, 'and I value such as thee.'

'Then do not needlessly estrange me for ever from thee. Give me my petition, and I shall be the truest servant in all thy realms; refuse it, or attempt to take from me what is my own, and there is none in all Russia shall hate thee more than I.'

Ivan laughed, frowned, looked haughtily, and said:

'Nay, thy favour or thy hatred will not support or destroy the Tsar. Do asseemeth good to thee, Stroganof. I am stronger than thou; it is better not to withstand the Tsar. Is this the maiden?'

The question came so unexpectedly that I only flushed and had no answer ready, but to my surprise Vera came to the rescue.

'Yes,' she said, 'I am she.' Ivan frowned and then smiled.

'Ha!' he said, 'you are one of the bold ones also, I perceive.'

'Is it boldness to acknowledge one's betrothed husband?' she replied quietly.

'Where the Tsar is a suitor, betrothals no longer hold!' said Ivan.

'Are we slaves, then, to be bought by the highest bidder, whether we will or no?'

Vera looked so haughtily at the Tsar that I trembled, in spite of my admiration; for, I thought, she appeared in her anger so queenly and so splendid that no man of woman born could see her and withhold his love from so magnificent a creature. But Ivan was too angry to be in love.

'Silence, you handsome fury!' he cried, half raising his hand as though to strike her. At this gesture I dared greatly, for it drove my patience clean out of me, patience being a quality which had never a very firm hold upon me.

'Dare to touch her,' I cried, 'and, Tsar though you be, I shall stretch you at my feet; it would not be the first time, remember.'

And now again my master revealed his real greatness. Forgetting in an instant his own passion and my audacity, he only thought of the good which lay in my fearlessness, and not at all of the disloyalty and rudeness which disfigured it.

'Sasha,' he said, 'you are a man after my heart; I swear it! We will not quarrel. If there are others as fair as this one, I shall think of thee and leave her; but if she be the fairest of all, I must take her. This is more than I would say to any other boyar in the realm.'

'And it is enough, sire,' said Vera; 'come, Sasha, we have done our best, and the Tsar has done his; the rest is with God.'

It did not appear to me that our prospects were much the brighter, for it was extremely unlikely that the Tsar would see any maiden more lovely than Vera; but there was nothing to gain by further argument or further useless incensing of the Tsar, and my princess and I—having bowed to Ivan—withdraw, I limping a little in spite of my efforts to walk in my usual manner. Vera noticed it at once; there was blood, too, upon my boot, and I left a track of blood as I went.

'What has happened to your foot, Sasha?' she said; 'see, it is bleeding.'

'The nails in the wood pavement are badly knocked in,' I said; 'I must have wounded myself with one of them!' Vera stopped and examined my foot. Then she suddenly started to her feet, flushing red with rage.

'Sasha,' she said—though in her agitation she could scarcely form the words—'I will die a thousand deaths, I swear it, before I consent to marry this tyrant and bully. It was he that did this. Confess it was his accursed spike that went through your foot, and you never groaned and never winced, lest I should see it and tear his heart from his bosom!' Vera's own bosom heaved and panted in her agitation. She burst into tears, and astonished me still further by repeatedly kissing my foot when we reached the privacy of home, and afterwards washing the wound—such as it was—and doctoring it with some of Tatyána's herbs; it was nothing of a wound in reality, but it might have been.

And over that bleeding foot of mine we solemnly vowed once again that, come what might, Vera should never be allowed to wed the young Tsar; and once again we took comfort in the renewal of this determination. For what though the meshes of the net wound themselves ever closer around us? At the last moment we should rend in shreds the snare and escape; we had sworn it!

*(To be continued.)*

## *At the Sign of the Ship.*

LAST month all the Scottish lion in a peaceful nature was aroused by reviewers who did not understand, or pretended not to understand, common Scots words. Since then another critic, Mr. Purcell, devotes three columns and a half of the *Academy* (June 27) to what I fear I must call incoherences about Scotland and Scotch authors and critics, all *à propos* of Mr. Stevenson's *Weir of Hermiston*. As Mr. Purcell has never crossed the Tweed (he says), his opinion of Caledonia is like that about 'rich Cyrene,' which the Delphic oracle treated with contempt.

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Mr. Purcell says: 'Caledonia . . . has ever been to each poetic child of her own, not only a fit nurse, but a most partial, indulgent, and boastful one.' If Mr. Purcell knows anything at all about literary history, he knows, on reflection, that his remark is incorrect. He *must* have heard of Jeffrey's reviews of 'a poetic child' named Scott. Was Jeffrey—then 'the first of British critics'—'partial, indulgent, and boastful' as regards Sir Walter? Nonsense! In fact no man is a prophet in his own country, a Scot least of all. San Francisco, not Edinburgh, has a memorial of Mr. Stevenson. Mr. Crockett has told a tale which I may therefore repeat. It is *ben trovato*, if not *vero*. When Mr. Barrie's amusing *Professor's Love Story* was played in Kirriemuir (Thrums), one of the audience was heard to remark, 'Man, this is waur nor' (worse than) 'Walker, London!' This is the common line of Scotch criticism of 'a brither Scot.' 'Brither' is Scots for 'brother,' by the way. Yet Mr. Purcell, with fine humour, avers that the critical Caledonian 'feels that he has discovered another masterpiece' if he sees in print 'but one cherished topographical name—the Brig o' Guddlepaddock, or the Kirk o' Cuddyclavers.' Alas! I have not found the Northern reviewer so complacent, and it was a Scot who trampled so noisily on what he

called 'The Kailyard School.' Five or six Scotch novels have long lain unopened on the shelves of one Caledonian critic, who owns that he cannot draw paper-knife on them, for good or bad, we have, at present, too much of the *genre*. The English, it appears to me, and not the Scotch, have commonly given to Scotch writers the warmest welcome, while the severities of Scotch critics to their literary fellow-countrymen, from Jeffrey on Scott to the lowest country newspaper on Mr. Crockett, are notorious. It is quite true, as Mr. Purcell sees, that the Scot who stays at home is more severe to his countrymen than the exile.

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Mr. Purcell continues thus: 'There is the grossest assurance, effrontery, downright impudence' ('his mainers astonishes *me*') 'in the Scotch argument that you and I cannot appreciate or criticise Scotch genius because we do not exactly know what "paddocks" are, and have never gone there' (in Heaven's name, *where*?) 'to identify them.' Is it, then, impudent to say that even a person so superior (to grammar) as Mr. Purcell cannot criticise an author whom he cannot translate? Mr. Purcell obviously does not know that 'paddock,' or 'padock,' is English for a frog. Though he does not know English, and thinks that English is Scots, he supposes that he can appreciate a writer of Scots. 'The padock, or frog-paddock, usually keeps or breeds on the land,' says Walton, an old English writer, not partial to his country's invaders. So Mr. Purcell may go 'there'—namely, to the *Compleat Angler*—for the information which he is so strangely pleased at not possessing. Probably he is not really so very ignorant; the affectation is a cryptic kind of reviewer's joke.

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For my part, I think it very probable that an Englishman as ignorant as Mr. Purcell pretends to be, or is, cannot appreciate Burns or Scott, simply because he cannot translate them. Nor can he fully appreciate 'Hesiod, or Hafiz, or Dante, or Tourgenieff,' as Mr. Purcell seems to think he can, if he knows neither Greek, Persian, Italian, nor Russian. For my part, there is only one language of these four in which I can appreciate an author, and, if I knew Greek better, doubtless I could appreciate Pindar more. Perhaps Mr. Purcell reads Burns and Tourgenieff in French translations; perhaps he is a master of all the tongues. Like gifted Gilfillan, 'I hae been as far as Muscovia in my sma' trading way,' and have read Russian

authors in French translations. I cannot doubt that I missed much of merit, and that I must learn Italian and Spanish if I would appreciate Dante and Cervantes. In the same way exactly, a person proud of his ignorance of Scots must lose a great deal when he tries to appreciate a writer in Scots. But, cries Mr. Purcell, in his urbane tones, 'this is just disgusting conceit veiled under flimsy mysticism.' Mr. Purcell is the child of an age of popular education. Where is the conceit, and where the mysticism, in the opinion that persons ignorant of a language are not the best judges of the literature of that language?

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I will go further, and say that people acquainted with a country and with a national character get more pleasure than others do from the literature of that country. Conceited and mystical as Mr. Purcell may deem me, I am convinced that if I knew Russia and knew Spain, Cervantes and Tolstoi would give me certain pleasures which, in my ignorance, I do not taste. In the same way there are certain touches in Mr. Stevenson's work which please me, I am sure, more than they can please aliens in whom they awaken no old impressions, no certainty of experience testifying to their truth. No doubt Mr. Hardy has touches which produce the same pleasure in a Wessex man. Of course only an idiot would argue that only a Scot can appreciate Mr. Stevenson, or Scott, or Hogg. Any one can do so if, unlike Mr. Purcell, he knows enough of English to understand Scots, when his author is writing Scots. Certain local touches—Breton, Welsh and New England, Irish, Scotch, or what you please—will be missed by all but local readers. *The Lost Pibroch*, Mr. Neil Munro's excellent book, pleases me most where I know the scenes, and when I can fathom the Gaelic. An Anglo-Indian will get more than I do (which is abundant) out of Mr. Kipling. We can all, however, with limitations appreciate Mr. Kipling, and so any intelligent and educated-Englishman can appreciate Mr. Stevenson. But an Englishman who does not know what a 'paddock' is cannot be called educated, and an Englishman who, knowing, pretends not to know, cannot be called intelligent. He cuts a very poor figure.

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Mr. Purcell supposes that a Scot learns Scots by being 'born a peasant or allowed' (*proh pudor!*) 'to mix with the servants,'

or to speak with his tenantry, I would add, or by keeping a notebook. Mr. Purcell is, doubtless, unaware that there is also a not inconsiderable literature, poetical and historical, in the language which Quintin Kennedy wrote, and which John Knox anglicised. Professor Blackie being dead, I have ventured to lift up the voice of my testimony against the ignorance and incoherences of Mr. Purcell. What he really means, probably, is that friendship, regret, and national feeling have over-praised *Weir of Hermiston*. It may be so; I have not studied the reviews elaborately. We have a Scots proverb, 'Fules and bairns' (fools and children) 'should not see half-done work.' *Weir* is scarcely half-done, and no sensible adult will offer an opinion as to what the completed romance would have been. Friends and fellow-countrymen may have been betrayed by feelings not ungenerous, but Mr. Purcell's protests are not remarkable for taste, sense, or knowledge.

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As 'that Prince of Paper Lords, Lord Peter, broke the Laws of God, and Man, and Metre,' so a distinguished living writer objects even to the very rules of tradition in English style. I shall not name him, for his remarks have interest enough without personalities. He says: 'How often does it not happen to pains-taking writers to alter such stiff "literary" English in their first draughts into the honest colloquialism; and how often do they not find the national-schoolmaster type of critic finding fault with them for their "carelessness"—which is really the effect of careful and thoughtful revision. The plain truth is that, whenever a man takes a pen in hand to write, his first instinct is to adopt a certain impossible "literary" dialect, which became obsolete as speech a hundred years ago; only by the utmost consideration of every phrase—by deliberately asking himself, "Do I ever *say* that?"—by carefully splitting his infinities (*sic*), throwing his prepositions away from his verbs to the end of his sentences, and leaving many pendent *to's* and *at's*, can he attain at last to the desired and desirable colloquialism. Any school-girl can write absolutely "correct" and academic English; it is the pure spoken English of everyday life which costs a man hard in time and trouble.' This argument appears to take it for granted that colloquial English, 'as she is spoke' by every one who is not a prig, should be the model in literary composition. This doctrine I cannot accept. First, it is contrary to all tradition, which, of course, in

my learned opponent's eyes, proves it to be right. But I am fond of tradition, on the whole, as it represents the sum of human experience. Thus mankind has made every sort of experiment in marriage, and all the civilised Western races have ended in monogamy. Monogamy has its drawbacks, but experience has proved these to be less unendurable than the inconveniences attendant on polygamy, polyandry, and the delightful system of 'going as you please.' In the same way, universal tradition has recognised a certain standard of accuracy in literary language which is not demanded in ordinary talk. Greeks and Romans did not speak as they wrote. We do not praise a person who 'speaks like a printed book,' and it is a curious and inexplicable fact that some Americans talk more like printed books than we do. Yet I should hesitate to applaud a man who wrote, on all occasions and on all themes, as the mass of people talk, that is, loosely, incorrectly, with many an aposiopesis, and without distinction. Mr. Stevenson, who wrote with such a distinguished charm, in conversation was boyishly colloquial. I am glad he talked as he talked, and wrote in a very different style. Dr. Johnson was an example on the other side; he talked much better English than he wrote, except when he wrote the *Lives of the Poets*.

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Literature, in brief, is expected to use language as an artist uses his materials; few of us are artists in conversation, and the exceptions are subject to laws of a different kind. A sort of standard is kept up in literature; a measure of cadence, a quality of accuracy is required. If these be neglected, and if the standard of current talk be adopted by authors, that standard, through human indolence, will be constantly degraded. The advocate of the opposite theory tells writers that they should 'carefully split their infinities,' by which I doubt not that he means their *infinities*. In place of writing 'to run rapidly,' he should write 'to rapidly run.' As a matter of fact, I am priggish enough not to split my infinitives in ordinary talk. I feel no kind of temptation to do so, nor do I think that most people are thus tempted. On the other hand, the lax, formless scribes of to-day break all the decent rules of language without an effort. Why should I do violence to my tastes and habits by imitating their slovenliness at great cost of labour? In conversation I know that I sin in 'shalls' and 'wills,' 'woulds' and 'shoulds.' This is the inborn fault of the Scot and the Hibernian. My endeavour, often futile



is to be correct with the pen, at least. Apparently my labour should be given to perpetrating distasteful blunders. If I wrote, 'How often do they not find the national-schoolmaster type of critic finding fault,' as our author does, the two 'finds' would annoy my ear—a proof of my depravity. 'The national-schoolmaster type,' again, strikes me as an ill phrase; I cannot help preferring some other 'nice derangement of epitaphs.' But no doubt our authority has accumulated his sentence toilsomely, in a conscientious pursuit of the colloquial. To be colloquial, 'he is at pains to write ill,' and occasionally succeeds. At the same time, after all his trouble, he does not write in the least as any mortal talks. To oblige him, I say 'as any mortal talks,' for the colliding 'tals,' in 'mortal talks,' are annoying to my ear. Here is an example of failure to write as people speak:

'I do not know what authority exists for importing the ethical limitation of an "ought" into this special matter, the prohibition is probably as baseless in its way as that other famous critical prohibition, so much in vogue in the eighteenth century, against the admission of similes into the first book of an epic poem.'

Does anybody, does Mr. Herbert Spencer even, *talk* like that? A man would put it, 'I don't see where the *ought* comes in. One might as well say there shouldn't be a simile in the first book of an epic, like Boileau, or some other old Johnnie.' Do *you* talk about 'unawakened potentialities'? I don't, for one, but our author writes about them. Oh, heaven and earth, does any mortal speak like this?—'To see these things' (some Italian peculiarities) 'aright, however, we must possess the rare gift of ethnical psychology, backed by the power of throwing ourselves outside the ethnical ethics of our own idiosyncrasy.' The English for *that*, I fancy, is 'we must judge foreigners by their own standards.' This is colloquial, without being slipshod, and the maxim thus expressed loses its appearance of scientific profundity. That may, or may not, be a thing to regret. As my version is not bad in grammar, I am conceited enough to prefer it to a sentence which seems inconsistent with its author's principles. When he wrote all that about 'ethnical psychology,' and 'the ethnical ethics of our own idiosyncrasy,' I wonder if he 'deliberately asked himself "Do I ever *say* that?"' And, if he does '*say* that,' does he not 'speak like a printed book,' a printed book by George Eliot in her wildest mood? To be sure it is not so much literary English as scientific terminology. The '*dialect*,' alas!

is too obviously not 'impossible ;' would that, in literary discussion, it were 'obsolete' ! *Enfin*, there are, and ought to be, different standards for the written and the spoken word, and these standards vary in various kinds of composition. There are rules in every game, and no game can be played without rules. Meanwhile, if any schoolgirl can write absolutely correct and academic English, what enormous pains must many writers be at before they attain their present desirable slipslop !

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Criticism is becoming as lively as in the days of Milton or Palmasius. I remark an American critic who accuses another twice of 'wilful falsehood,' because his adversary expresses a certain opinion about a novel by Mr. Thomas Hardy ! Mr. Thomas Hutchinson, again, discoursing of Wordsworth's works (that inflammatory topic), charges another scholar with 'futile babblement,' and a mind 'consciously sophistical, or radically and hopelessly confused.' These are very brave words, 'and may Heaven confound you for your theory of the Irregular verb !' But where is Progress, if we are not to be a little more urbane ?

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The University Match was highly gratifying. I love to see happy faces around me, and I saw plenty of them, on July 4, in the Pavilion, between the hours of five and six P.M. The elevens were, in fact, fairly well matched. If Mr. Cunliffe could always find his length, he would be by far the best bowler in the two teams, but, for some reasons, he was only himself for an hour or so, in the second innings of Cambridge. Mr. Wilson bowled with wonderful steadiness and accuracy for the Light Blue till his very last over, and always required careful playing. Mr. Cobbold was also puzzling, and may be a worthy rival of Mr. Hartley, who had more success. Mr. Jessop bowled some beautiful balls, but, on the whole, deserved what he got. The first Cambridge innings was deplorably academic and dull. Mr. Jessop and Mr. Hemingway in vain sought to relieve it. The prettiest innings was Mr. Bray's, in both ventures of Cambridge, and Mr. Druce displayed steadfast courage just when a rout seemed probable. Mr. Cobbold also hit finely, and every one was sorry for Mr. Grace. Why neither he nor Mr. Bardswell bowled is a mystery ; some accident may have deprived them of their usual skill with the

ball. The long first score of Cambridge was not surprising with so powerful an eleven of batters, and but for Mr. Hartley Oxford would have made a very poor exhibition. Mr. G. O. Smith was last choice, like Lord George Scott, some years ago, and, like Lord George, he won the match. Mr. Foster rather disappointed a world which never was so witched by noble batsmanship as by his innings in 1895. On that occasion he was almost unsupported; this year Mr. Leveson-Gower, Mr. Pilkington, and Mr. Bardswell rallied nobly round Mr. Smith. Any one who saw Cambridge bowl in the match which they won so pluckily against M.C.C. knew that the Oxford men, if they kept their hearts up, had no very difficult task to get 330 on Saturday. But cricket is full of accidents, and, no doubt, the odds were on Cambridge. Such a score had never been made up in a University match; great courage and bodily vigour were needed. In fielding, Mr. Mordaunt is all that Mr. Royle and Mr. Jardine were, with an added grace. Mr. Marriott, at point, was hardly less remarkable on the Cambridge side, and the wicket-keeping was excellent throughout. The fielding was never demoralised by heat and fatigue, nor was the bowling ever absolutely 'in a knot.' The mistake in giving voluntary no-balls probably lost the match to Cambridge, and should serve 'for instruction of manners,' like the Apocrypha.

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Let us welcome the *Cornhill* at its old price, and in its good old 'form.' The first number is full of excellent things, and, if good things are not popular, that is the fault of the populace. Mrs. Ritchie's *Reminiscences* are always delightful; Sir M. E. Grant Duff is most entertaining about the *Menagiana*. Miss Mary Kingsley instructs and amuses amateurs of ghosts in savage life, and, in brief, all is admirable of its kind. If the world will prefer photographs and frivolities, it may even 'gang its ain gait.' But is it not sad that twenty years of education should have brought us to a literature of shreds and patches? Would the Elizabethan groundlings have 'groundled' as we do—the chance being offered to them? I fear the supply creates the demand, and that, if our mechanical horrors had come into the Athenian market, all Athens would have burned its gods, and adored the machine-made.

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'Rapier' prints in the *Badminton Magazine* for June a curious letter on golf, by Sir Walter Scott. Sir Walter believed in the derivation of 'Golf' from 'Kolf,' 'Club,' which remains the most probable theory. The player, Adam Paterson, who decorated a house with arms (golf clubs) and a Latin motto, did not play with any king, as in the tradition which Scott doubted, but with the Duke of York, afterwards James II., an adept at golf and at the *jeu de mail*.

A. LANG.

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